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FACTORY LABOUR IN INDIA

Factory Labour in India

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PREFACE

THIS book represents an attempt to discuss systematically and comprehensively the economic condition of factory labourers in India. It was undertaken at the suggestion of Dr. Gilbert Slater and comprises personal observations extending over the last ten years, some of which, of course, form the basis of my book on 'Factory Labour in the Punjab.'

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express my gratitude to Professor V. G. Kale, Dr. Gilbert Slater, Sir Richard Burn and Sir John Maynard for the kindly interest they have taken in this work which, I hope, will prove useful to all students of the subject. My thanks are due to my colleagues, Messrs. K. R. Pisharoti, B. R. Kumar and P. K. Mahadevan, who helped me considerably in the correction of proofs. To Mr. Mahadevan who took over the tedious, but responsible, task of preparing the Index I am doubly thankful.

Last but not least, I wish to express my extreme thankfulness to our Vice-Chancellor, Rao Bahadur S. E. Runganadhan, M.A., I.E.S. who has kindly added an introductory note to the book and also sanctioned the publication of the same by the University.

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY,
ANNAMALAINAGAR,
3rd February, 1930.

AHMAD MUKHTAR.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

In the following pages the Author has made a careful study of the economic condition of factory labourers in India and has prefixed to that study a critical account of labour legislation by the Central and Provincial Governments during the past fifty years. Dr. Mukhtar has been a close student of Indian labour problems for several years and the results of his investigations in different parts of the country which are set forth in this book should be of great value to all those who are interested in the welfare of industrial workers and particularly to the Royal Commission on Labour which is at present touring in India.

Though there has been a great development of organised industries during the past thirty years, there is a general feeling that the industrialisation of India has not been rapid enough. But this slowness in the growth of industrialism may after all be a blessing in disguise to the country as there is yet an opportunity; before it is too late, of avoiding the worst evils of the Industrial Revolution in the West by suitable legislation and social welfare work.

The condition of the factory labourer, even at present, is deplorable. To quote the Author's words—"He is poor, very poor. His labour is often sweated and underpaid. He is badly fed, badly clothed and badly housed and is subject to occasional epidemics. He is also ignorant and unorganised."

Fortunately, however, in spite of the preoccupation of the leaders of public opinion with politics, attention is beginning to be focussed on the industrial problems of the country. Apart from the measures which the Government and large employers of labour may take for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes, there is a vast field for our educated young men for social service among them. By conducting a systematic survey of industrial conditions, by starting night-schools for labourers and by other forms of social welfare work, the young men who leave our universities can do national service of the greatest importance.

I hope Dr. Mukhtar's book and his teaching and influence will give an impetus to economic studies in this university and will lead some of its students to take an active part in social work for the benefit of the working classes round about them. For whatever adds to the well-being and efficiency of the labouring classes contributes to the strength of the nation and to its progress and prosperity.

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY,
ANNAMALAINAGAR,
3rd February, 1930

S. E. RUNGANADHAN,
Vice-Chancellor.

FACTORY LABOUR IN INDIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

India is in a state of transition. The boycott of the Simon Commission by the Swarajists, the astounding resolutions of the Calcutta Congress and the general awakening of the masses show which way the wind is blowing. There is also a general industrial unrest. Strikes and lock-outs are the order of the day. And all eyes are now fixed on the political programme, to the sacrifice of several other things equally important, if not more. The politicians of the country have evidently relegated the study of industrial conditions to the background. Most of them seem to think that the attainment of Swaraj will bring about the dawn of a millennium.

"Once self-government is attained, there will be prosperity enough for all, but not till then." This remark was made by the late Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji in his presidential speech at the National Congress of 1906. It certainly contains an element of truth, but it does not mean that we should become altogether indifferent to the economic conditions of our country. The aim of politics is the well-being and welfare of a nation and it is undoubtedly the noblest thing which any person can aspire for. The indifference* of the Indian leaders towards economic problems is therefore to be greatly regretted.

The percentage of our population which is occupied in industries appears small when compared to the agriculturists. But it is large in the aggregate. India ranks amongst the great industrial nations of the world. Her jute industry holds an enviable position. Her cotton industry is large and stands fifth

* Refer to an address at Calcutta by Sir Daniel Hamilton under the auspices of the Bengal Economic Society on 31st January, 1929 (Capital—February 7 1929, page 267, column 1):—

"Political Economy, which is in reality one subject, has become two—politics and economics, which may be likened to chaff and wheat. Politics is now a game, the stake being men's lives, while economics is a serious business, on the right understanding of which the prosperity of the people and the welfare of the State depend. Unfortunately, the chaff is more plentiful in these days than the wheat, the result being that great masses of the people are starving for want of that physical and spiritual nourishment which forms the bread of life."

in order of importance in the whole world. Besides these, there are a number of other industries of varying sizes. They employ a large number of labourers. The statement that follows shows how the average daily number of those employed in registered factories has increased steadily from year to year :—

Year.	Total average daily number.	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.
1896	398,243	315,426	58,829	20,462	3,526
1897	421,545	335,702	60,271	21,564	4,008
1898	422,729	334,594	60,603	23,219	4,313
1899	452,796	360,029	65,308	22,939	4,520
1900	468,956	372,617	68,610	23,106	4,623
1901	514,329	409,013	75,853	24,938	4,525
1902	541,634	424,375	85,882	26,440	4,937
1903	553,422	437,872	85,453	27,568	5,529
1904	587,560	466,721	85,221	30,273	5,345
1905	632,636	501,227	93,431	32,171	5,807
1906	690,712	546,693	102,796	35,112	6,111
1907	729,663	576,652	103,764	41,977	7,270
1908	766,150	606,296	107,709	42,786	9,359
1909	785,910	619,015	114,455	43,454	8,986
1910	792,511	624,945	115,540	43,273	8,753
1911	791,944	629,227	115,090	39,450	8,177
1912	869,643	685,822	130,025	44,132	9,664
1913	936,390	736,904	143,160	45,814	10,512
1914	950,973	746,773	144,157	48,984	11,059
1915	1,004,106	791,978	150,356	50,906	10,886
1916	1,061,409	839,438	158,453	52,147	11,371
1917	1,076,201	857,221	158,644	49,882	10,454
1918	1,122,922	897,469	161,343	53,184	10,926
1919	1,171,513	927,529	177,376	54,946	11,592
1920	1,238,725	986,367	184,922	55,503	11,933
1921	1,266,395	1,010,686	187,596	56,926	11,187
1922	1,361,002	1,086,457	206,887	56,522	11,106
1923	1,409,173	1,113,508	221,045	61,841	12,779
1924	1,455,173	1,147,729	235,332	60,240	12,291
1925	1,494,958	1,178,719	247,514	57,199	11,526

The position of Indian factory-labour is, therefore, an element of great magnitude and importance in the welfare of the masses. There is great dearth of reliable statistical data bearing on this subject and very few systematic attempts have hitherto been made to enquire into their economic condition closely. The publications of the Bombay Labour Office, the reports of the Labour Commissioner in Madras and a few other fragmentary enquiries have as yet barely touched the fringe of this gigantic problem.

Labour unrest in India has assumed huge proportions of late. How can we account for it? This question has taxed

the ingenuity of several inventive geniuses who, in their attempt to offer a satisfactory solution, have come to the conclusion that our industrial strikes are fomented by the Soviet. It is said that these are communistic in nature and aim at the overthrow of Indian society. Communism*, as a theory, appeals mostly to the very poor. And if, for a moment, we think that communism is widely spreading, it must be understood that there is something wrong in the country.

The Indian factory-labourer lives in an atmosphere which, compared to that of England, stinks destitution, disease and

* Compare speech delivered by Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer in the Legislative Assembly on the 10th September, 1928 on the "Public Safety (Removal from India) Bill":—

". . . . . . Before concluding, I submit that the economic aspect to which the Honourable the Home Member referred is not based on Bolshevism or the activities of communist or semi-communist agents or their suspected victims, but it is based on hunger. 'Hunger,' said a great Irishman of the eighteenth century, I refer to Edmund Burke, 'is the prolific cause of revolutions.' The strikes have taken a revolutionary turn as the Home Member perhaps fears they have or they are likely to. I do not think so. It is based on the hunger of the Indian people. Readers of Miss Mayo's 'Mother India' are aware what a poor country India is. Even that wonderful woman has not denied the poverty of the peasants, the poverty of the working men of India. . . In no country in the world is labour so poor, is life so wretched, is existence so miserable as in India; and that, Sir, has to be tackled, and nothing else, if the root cause of present discontent is to be removed. . . . ." (Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. III, 1928; 10th September, 1928, page 467). Also please refer to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's speech on the above Bill (Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. III, 1928; 15th September, 1928, page 856):—

". . . . . I have not the faintest sympathy with these doctrines . . . But they will spread . . . . They will spread even if this legislation is passed . . . . . The only thing that will stop the spreading of communistic doctrines in this country is the doing of justice to the people of India. . . . You have failed to do justice to Indians. . . . . The Government have failed to bring about happy relations between labourers and capitalists . . . . ." For further opinion please refer to the Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. III, 1928, page 1354; 24th September, 1928. Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar, while speaking on the Public Safety Bill, said:—

". . . . . Now, Sir, ever since this bogey of communism or bolshevism has been set afloat, every possible strike, every violence in the strike, is attributed to it.

". . . . I have never even heard whispers that these strikes had anything to do with communism or bolshevism. All these strikes are hunger strikes. They are not due to communist or swarajist influences; but they are all hunger strikes . . . . ."

ignorance. He is under-fed, under-clothed and badly housed. His life is a continuous struggle against poverty—especially in growing industrial areas like Bombay and Calcutta. He gets up early in the morning at about 4 o'clock, prepares his own meals or assists his wife in doing so and walks to his factory, which is in some cases a few miles off, to be there in time or, if possible, before time. After doing his daily work, he plods his weary way to a dark, dingy and overcrowded hovel to take the night's repose. In several cases, he is huddled together in the same room with workers of both sexes. The room serves manifold purposes—kitchen, bath-room, sitting-room, dining-room and all. This unnatural mode of living debases many of his class to the level of brutes.

But, alas, the general public is callously indifferent to the problems of the poor. "The destruction of the poor is their poverty." * Our workers have gained little or nothing from the recent rise in wages. The causes of their helplessness and poverty are not far to seek and there is a ray of hope that they may not continue for ever. Rowntree's description of workers in the city of York in 1899 may exactly fit in here :—

"Housed for the most part in sordid streets, frequently under overcrowded and unhealthy conditions, compelled very often to earn their bread by monotonous and laborious work and unable, partly through limited education and partly through overtime and other causes of physical exhaustion, to enjoy intellectual recreation, what wonder that many of these people fall a ready prey to the publican and the book-maker ? " † Drinking is not the only vice which several of the workers in India have got addicted to. But this, of all the vices, "leads to a neglect of family, to forgetfulness of all social duty, to distaste for work,

In this connection it must be remembered that the word communism or bolshevism is variously understood. It is sometimes associated with 'nationalism.' For example, Mr. J. T. Gwynn in his book on 'Indian Politics' (Nisbet & Co., London, 1924), page 32, says :—

". . . . . The Indian merchant class used to be notorious for strict and unswerving attention to its own business. Here we have a rising man of this class mixing in high politics, reading the Annals of Rajasthan, and wanting to give the rising generation a martial education. . . . . Who introduced you to this Bolshevik ? You ask. . . ."

* Marshall : Principles of Economics—(London, 1910), page 3.

† Rowntree : Poverty (London, 1922)—page 179.

to want, theft and crimes. It leads at the very least to the hospital, for alcoholism causes a great variety of diseases, many of them most deadly." *

Alcoholism is a frightful scourge. But there are scourges much more frightful than this in India. Several epidemics take a heavy toll of life of the labourers. It is a difficult task to combat them, mostly because the ignorance and illiteracy of the people, coupled with their insanitary habits and surroundings, stand as a bar in their way.

Till recently, the workers in India were mostly inarticulate. The War of 1914 set fire to the great powder magazine of restlessness which had taken a firm grip of the masses and which had been slowly gaining strength for a long time past. The industrial revolution which had been slowly going on took a rapid pace as a result ofthe War. Large scale production, a necessary consequence of the introduction of machinery, has been accompanied by centralization and monopolization by the few. It produced some disastrous results in the West and it is already apparent that this will be the experience of India also. "The tramp," says Mr. Henry George, "comes with the locomotive, and almshouses and prisons are as surely the marks of material progress as are costly dwellings, rich warehouses and magnificent churches." † He further says, that "the association of poverty with progress is the great enigma of our times. It is the central fact from which spring industrial, social and political difficulties that perplex the world and with which statesmanship and philanthropy grapple in vain."

Such ugly features alarm us and it is our duty to see that the evil aspects of industrial revolution are vigorously combated in India. We enjoy an enviable position in one respect. Before us lies the industrial history of thegreat powers of the world, of the battles they fought, of the reverses they suffered and of the victories they won. We can profit by their experience and take safer steps as we proceed.

The following pages aim at an analysis of the economic condition of factory-labourers in India. Part I deals with the

* Quoted from Prof. Debove and Dr. Faisans by Badr-ul-Hasan in his "Drink and Drug evil in India."

† Henry George; Progress and Poverty (New York, 1880), pages 7 and 9.

genesis and history of Indian factory legislation up-to-date. It also traces the growth of trade-unionism and gives a critical account of the recent Trade-Union Act and the Trade Disputes Act. Lastly, it studies the subject of industrial accidents and shows how organised workers will benefit from the Workmen's Compensation Act. Part II describes the economic condition of factory-workers in detail, the nature of their employment, their domestic environments and all those factors which retard or promote their economic interests in life. Suggestions for possible avenues of improvement are made where necessary and practicable.

PART I

THE STATE IN RELATION TO FACTORY LABOUR

CHAPTER II

THE FACTORY ACTS

THE progress of factory-labour legislation in India took the slow course of trial and error. It was once held to be exceedingly harmful for the employers and the employees, but experience has shown that the legislative enactments in the cause of workers have proved very beneficial. It is often difficult to determine what particular interests take the lead in fostering labour legislation in a country. In England and the United States of America, it was the humanitarian who was first fired to activity in the cause of helpless labourers. There, the genesis of labour legislation is clear enough. Much controversy has, however, centred round this point in India. Let us begin with a critical survey of the whole movement.

The report * on the moral and material progress of India for the year 1871–72 states that the deterioration of Manchester goods and the duty on their import into India gave an incentive to the Indian cotton-mill industry. The first cotton factory was started about the middle of the last century. By the year 1872–73, there were 11 spinning and weaving mills in the town of Bombay and 8 in other parts of the presidency—Surat, Broach and Ahmedabad.

A profitable industry thus sprang up and offered employment to several thousand operatives. There were cotton mills even beyond the limits of the Bombay presidency. The Elgin Cotton Weaving and Spinning Company existed at Cawnpore, and the Goosey Cotton Mill Company was located near Calcutta. A prosperous jute mill industry and trade also went on : in 1871–72 Calcutta exported 5,700,000 gunny bags to Burma.

India was so far looked upon by Englishmen as a great business-mart. She was undoubtedly a great agricultural country, but her possibilities for capitalistic production had not yet been foreseen. And, while attempts to explore further avenues of commercial intercourse between India and England were being

* Great Britain Parliamentary Papers, East India, 1873 H. of C., Vol. 50, paper 172, pages 92 and 93.

made, the cotton mill industry in India was making steady headway. It was Major Moore, Inspector-in-Chief, Cotton Department, Bombay, who, in his report * on the administration of his department for the year 1872–73, drew attention to the bad condition of their labourers. He mentioned that the poorer classes derived much benefit, but that they were subject to some serious disadvantages. The hours of labour were unduly long, the work was tiring and women and children were yoked to their hard task without a weekly day of rest. † This report was published in 1874 and was shortly after followed by an article in the 'London Times' ‡ from its Calcutta correspondent. There was a mention of the increase of mills for spinning and weaving jute and cotton and of their influence on the health and morals of workers. About this time, Mr. J. A. Ballard, Mint Master, Bombay, dilated upon the sufferings of factory-labourers and the excessive work they had to do in factories. He suggested the promulgation of a Factory Act for protecting poor women and children in Bombay. §

Then followed Mr. Alexander Redgrave, H. M. Inspector of Factories, who, in his report for the half-year ending 31st October, 1874, ¶ wrote :—

"We see a cotton industry springing up in India extending with rapid strides and it behoves us to inquire whether that industry is carried on upon the old lines of the cotton manufacturer here, and if it is so carried on, as is the common report, by factories working 14 hours a day, it is well that legislation should step in while the industry is, so to speak, in its infancy and, by wise and moderate regulations, stop the growth of habits of long hours and of the employment of child labour."

The question of the condition of Indian labour was coming into prominence. The people who had so far interested themselves in this affair were not connected with Lancashire: at least no such charge was ever brought against them. They were moved to action purely from philanthropic motives, and their anxiety to broadcast the inhuman conditions of India brought

* Page 6.

† Administration Report of the Cotton Department, Bombay, for the year 1872–73, page 6.

‡ The Times, London—7th August, 1874, page 3, col. 3.

§ Bulletins of Indian Industries and Labour, No. 37 (1926), page 2.

¶ Page 30.

several humanitarians into the field. Let us trace this history further and see how affairs assumed a complex form for the layman.

An import duty of 5 per cent *ad valorem* on all articles, including cotton goods, had been in existence in India under the rule of the East India Company. This was raised to 10 per cent after 1857, but was reduced to 7·5 per cent in 1864. The Lancashire manufacturers had made successive attempts to secure its entire abolition. Representations were made to Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for India, as a result of which Lord Northbrook, Viceroy of India, was asked to give the whole question a patient and favourable consideration. As this agitation for the repeal of the cotton duty was going on, the press astounded the world by revealing the startling condition of labourers working in Indian factories. The commercial interests soon took up cudgels on behalf of Indian labourers as, they thought, their competition was unfair and would prejudicially affect their interests. And, as Lancashire's words were always looked upon as inimical to the interests of India, their representations on behalf of Indian workers could not naturally be interpreted in their true light. Thus, the entire agitation was regarded in India as a veiled conspiracy of Lancashire to cripple Indian industries.

This was but natural. The atmosphere was surcharged with commercial bitterness and hatred, and a reasoned and conscientious view of the situation could not be expected at the moment. But the prevailing opinion that any intervention with Indian labour conditions, prompted by the commercial interests of Great Britain, was bad, was not held universally. Dr. T. M. Nair's minute of dissent to the Indian Factory Labour Commission Report of 1908 gives an impartial view of the question. He says:—

"In spite of some attempts made in certain quarters to draw the Lancashire red-herring across the track of the Factory Commission, I never deviated from my fixed purpose of investigating things at first hand and of forming my opinions on the strength of what I saw and heard, rather than trusting to external inspiration to guide me in my inquiries. To me, personally, there was no incentive to take any step which would, even to the smallest degree, handicap the industries of my native

country in competition with Lancashire and Japan. But however much I, as a native of India, may be opposed to the influence of Lancashire in questions closely relating to the manufacturing interests of India, I cannot but admit that the result of Lancashire's interference has, on some occasions at least, been of considerable benefit to the Indian interests. The protection which factory women and children at present enjoy under the law, they owe to a large extent to Lancashire. The many abuses which we found to exist in connection with factory labour in India are certainly not of Lancashire's creation . . . . Abuses are abuses whether they are pointed out by friends or foes." *

It is a fact that abuses in Indian factories had attained huge proportions. The humanitarians were soon roused to a consciousness of their duty and they commenced an agitation for the legal protection of the Indian labourers. Lancashire utilised this agitation to secure a fair field of competition with India. Their participation gave a different colour to the movement for the superficial observer who began to look upon it as selfish and hostile.

There is one aspect of this controversy which should never be lost sight of. The Lancashire manufacturers were far ahead of their contemporaries in India in 1874 and had come to realise the importance which labour was daily acquiring. Labour was gaining force year after year, and the first step to secure international consideration for it dates back to 1881. In that year, the Swiss Government made an attempt, although without success, to enlist the help and co-operation of other governments in this matter. The trend of events was nevertheless apparent. Labour problems were growing from a national to an international importance, and it was clear that the unwholesome labour conditions of India would cast their evil influence not only upon their own country but upon foreign countries as well. And, after all, what right have we to attribute motives to Lancashire, when similar representations from English unionists on behalf of the Indian workers have been made at the instance of the Indians themselves? In 1919, a memorial, signed by

* Report of the Indian Factory Labour Commission, 1907-08 (London, 1908), page 81. Minute of dissent by Dr. T. M. Nair.

Messrs. S. Saklatwala and K. S. Bhat and some Englishmen, was submitted to the Rt. Hon'ble E. S. Montagu, then Secretary of State for India, protesting against the proposed scheme for working-class houses in the city of Bombay, as expounded and supported in the Bombay Legislative Council's meeting held on the 18th September, 1919, by H. E. Sir George Lloyd. Again, in 1927, a deputation consisting of two members was sent out to India by the Workers' Welfare League of India in London to make a first hand study of the condition of Indian labourers.

I have thus established that the origin of factory legislation in India was undoubtedly philanthropic in nature. The philanthropists surely availed themselves of the commercial arguments and used them to advance and strengthen their own standpoint. Mr. Redgrave, Major Moore, Mr. Ballard and the correspondents of the 'London Times' depicted the condition of Indian labourers as individuals and humanitarians, not as representatives of Lancashire. Even Lancashire's representations cannot be charged with ill-will, when Indians themselves appealed to her for support and help on behalf of their workers. I will show later on how it came to pass.

It is a mistake to mix issues arising from two different agitations—the agitation to repeal Indian cotton duties and the agitation to improve the condition of Indian labour by legislative enactments. This error has been committed in the past with the result that even advanced public opinion on the subject has been biassed all through. My aim is to clear away the mist and enable students of Indian economic history to form an impartial view of the whole matter.

At this stage, Miss Carpenter of Bristol, the founder of the National Indian Association and the renowned English philanthropist, played her glorious role faithfully and well. She was in India in the seventies. During her stay she inquired into the conditions of factory labour and invited the attention of the Secretary of State for India and of Lord Shaftesbury to the grave abuses associated therewith.

The discussion on factory legislation in India was first taken up in the House of Commons* on the 18th February,

* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series, 1875, February and March, p. 75.

1875, when Mr. Anderson (Glasgow) drew the attention of the Under-Secretary of State for India to the uncontrolled Indian factories where women and children were systematically worked for 16 hours a day, in many cases even including Sundays. He further asked if the Indian Government would legislate for the prevention of these evils on the lines of legislation in England. Lord George Hamilton replied that representations had been received on the subject, which was engaging the careful attention of the Secretary of State. On the 30th July, 1875, the Earl of Shaftesbury, a great philanthropist and a staunch supporter of factory legislation in his own country, took up the case of Indian factory legislation in the House of Lords. He dilated mainly on Mr. Redgrave's report and showed that English interference proceeded from no jealousy of the rising trade of India. He further added :—

"There is also a commercial view of this question. We must bear in mind that India has the raw-material and cheap labour and, if we allow the manufacturers there to work their operatives 16 or 17 hours and put them under no restriction, we are giving them a very unfair advantage over the manufacturers of our own country and we might be under-sold, even in Manchester itself, by manufactured goods imported from the East." *

The Marquis of Salisbury, in pointing out his difficulties, remarked how a great opposition in India was being engineered by interested persons. There is one point which I must emphasize once again at this stage. The people of India were largely illiterate in the 19th century. The factory labourers lived in a semi-servile condition and were unconscious of their own importance in life. On the other hand, the factory-owners belonged to the educated class and were naturally the first to take advantage of the situation and raise a hue and cry at home. It was Miss Carpenter who first organised an opposition in India and carried on her agitation in the face of several difficulties.

Meanwhile, the Secretary of State for India drew the attention of the Bombay Government to the grave abuses existing in the textile mills. A Commission was thereupon appointed by the latter on 23rd March, 1875. There were nine members on it,

* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series, July and August, 1875, page 211.

seven of whom represented the employer class. One commissioner left for England, after tendering his resignation. The Commission was called upon to inquire into, and report on the prevailing condition and system of management in the factories in Bombay and its vicinity with a view to rendering labour legislation feasible. It held ten meetings and inquired into the general working of factories, their ventilation and sanitation, their working hours, the unguarded state of machinery, the question of factory children, their ages and the existing arrangements for their education. The results of the inquiry of the Commission may be thus stated* :—

"(1) As a rule, all the machinery is protected, but some portions may not be sufficiently protected. All the witnesses concur that protection of machinery is both necessary and desirable.

"(2) Eight years appears to be the general age given as that of the youngest children employed in the mills, but some witnesses have stated their age to be as young as 5 or 6 years.

"(3) The hours of work are stated to be from sunrise to sunset, with ½ hour for rest in the middle of the day. In the longest days of the year, this would give about 13 hours of work a day, including the ½ hour rest. In the shortest days, it would give about 11 hours. The children appear to be on the premises all the time, alternately working and resting.

"(4) There are no fixed number of holidays for any factory during the year. One closes every Sunday in the year; others every other Sunday; and others still one Sunday in the month. In addition, native holidays are given. On an average, the factories work from 300 to 320 days in the year from sunrise to sunset.

"(5) The health of the operatives is stated to be good.

"(6) The ventilation in some factories is better than in others, and the Commission is of opinion that it has not received the attention it deserves from many of the owners.

"(7) Gratuitous schooling is given in a small way in two of the factories, but in none of the others.

* Report of Commissioners appointed by the Governor of Bombay in Council to inquire into the conditions of operatives in the Bombay factories in 1875, page 2.

"(8) On the question of the necessity of legislation the witnesses are divided, but, on the whole, they may be considered as giving their evidence in favour of a simple and plain enactment dealing fairly with the subject and not entering into too much detail."

The Commissioners themselves were not unanimous in their recommendations. The President and Dr. Blaney favoured a simple legislation to be applied to the whole of India, fixing hours of work for children and providing for the proper fencing of machinery. Upon the receipt of the report of the Commission, further inquiries were made from the Collectors of Broach and Surat. Sufficient evidence was not forthcoming to strengthen the hands of the Government in introducing labour legislation, and the Governor of Bombay refused to take any action in the matter. He was of opinion that legislation would do more harm than good.

And now came the crisis. The Hon'ble Sorabjee Shapurjee Bengalee started a fresh agitation for factory legislation. He drafted a Bill and forwarded it to the Governor of Bombay in April, 1878. The Bombay Legislative Council, by a majority, considered that Mr. Bengalee had not succeeded in making out a case even for limited legislation. Consequently, the Governor-General of India refused to adopt the Bill.

Mr. Bengalee was however firm as a rock. This time he changed his tactics and appealed to Manchester for help. In a letter to Mr. John Croft at Manchester he wrote *:—

". . . I have, therefore, no remedy left but to try what can be done through English influence which, as a matter of course, is so potent with our governing classes. . . ."

If there was any doubt about the healthy effect of the movement for factory legislation in India, the letter of Mr. Bengalee sets it at rest. Lancashire's influence was useful and even the Indians, headed by Mr. Bengalee, had to admit that nothing solid and substantial could be achieved without her co-operation. Mr. Bengalee's appeal was successful. Several letters appeared in the 'London Times'† in 1878 from persons experienced in

* 'London Times,' Friday, September 13th, 1878, page 10, column 1.

† 'London Times,' 18th September, 1878; 28th September, 1878; 1st October, 78, and 3rd October, 1878.

Indian affairs, and almost all of them denounced the conditions prevailing in Indian factories. Lord Shaftesbury was up once again. On the 4th April, 1879, he moved in the House of Lords * :—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to instruct the Viceroy of India to take into immediate consideration the necessity of passing a law for regulating the labour of women and children in the mills and factories throughout Her Dominions in India."

In the course of his speech, Lord Shaftesbury said that labour conditions in India had become so cruel, oppressive and disgraceful and that the evidence from different sources was so overwhelming and so strong, that he had been forced to adopt the above motion. He related the hardship of factory women and children in India and implored the House, in the name of Mercy and Justice, to support him. In reply, Viscount Cranbrook gave assurance of the earnest desire of the Indian Government to legislate for Indian factory workers. Upon this, the motion was withdrawn.

The draft Bill of the Government of India was based on Mr. Bengalee's Bill and was introduced in the Central legislature on the 17th October, 1879. It was passed into an Act in 1881. The Act was applicable to all manufacturing premises, using mechanical power, employing not less than 100 persons, and working more than four months in the year. The employers were not to employ children below the age of seven. Children between seven and twelve were not to work for more than nine hours (actual) on any one day. They were also to have four holidays in every month. Adult labour was left to the mercy of free competition. The Local Governments were empowered to appoint Inspectors of factories and, in the absence of such appointments, the District Magistrates were to act as Inspectors in their respective jurisdictions. Dangerous machinery was to be safeguarded, and accidents were to be duly reported to the Local Governments concerned.

In the middle of the year 1881, the Government of India issued a circular to the Local Governments regarding the

* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, April 4, 1879, page 349.

administration of the new Act. Special stress was laid on its mild nature and the necessity of applying it in a conciliatory manner. It was also stated that care should be exercised in the appointment of Inspectors. At the same time, the Governor-General expressed a doubt regarding the wisdom of fixing the age of factory children at 7 years and asked the Local Governments to watch the effect of the measure closely.

The number of factory labourers was every year on the increase. The Factory Act had been at work since July, 1881. 14 minor breaches of the Act were noticed in 1883-84. In a mill at Nadiad, serious irregularities existed and the manager was fined twice.* Prior to 1886 and after the passing of the Factory Act of 1881, the Mill-owners' Association at Bombay had agreed to observe Sundays as weekly days of rest. This resolution was cancelled in 1886 and the native holidays were henceforth the only ones given in the Bombay factories.†

The work of inspecting factories fell on the District Officers in almost all the provinces. Bombay followed her own line of policy, and Mr. Meade King was deputed by the Secretary of State at her request to report on the working of the Factory Act. He found several flaws in the Act and submitted the following observations ‡ on 7th July, 1882, after an investigation extending over about 6 months :—

(1) There was a total absence of all sanitary provisions in the Indian Factory Act. The condition of the factory is reflected in the condition of workers and the addition of another section in relation to sanitation in the existing Act was urgently called for.

(2) Women and children were adversely affected by the monotony of work and they should not be employed before 6 A.M. or after 6 P.M. During this period, they should have either an hour's interval for food and rest or two breaks of half an hour each.

(3) No child below the age of 8 should be employed in a factory. Children should be medically examined before employment and declared physically fit and to have attained the age of 8.

* Parliamentary Papers, 1884-85, Vol. 60, paper 51, page 57.

† Parliamentary Papers, 1887, Vol. 62, paper 191, page 82.

‡ Parliamentary Papers, 1888, Vol. 77, paper 321, pages 5 to 11.

(4) He recommended the creation of a young persons' class between the ages of 13 and 16 and the limitation of their hours of labour.

Mr. Meade King's suggestions were circulated to all the Local Governments. Bombay and Madras welcomed them, Bengal offered a great opposition, while other Local Governments were only partly in their favour. Lord Ripon was therefore afraid to move for fresh legislation.

The Bombay Government stuck fast to its view and appointed a Commission in 1884 "to report on the advisability of extending Mr. Meade King's suggestions to textile and other factories and to consider the whole subject in all its bearings." The Commission consisted of seven members, with Mr. W. D. Mulock, Collector of Bombay, as its president. A Medical Committee was appointed in the same year to inquire into the general condition and health of mill operatives as compared with other labourers in the city of Bombay and to lay their report before the Mulock Commission. The Bombay Government also called upon their Sanitary Commissioner to investigate the sanitary conditions of local factories and give evidence before the Mulock Commission.

The personnel of the Mulock Commission consisted mostly of factory owners. Even the witnesses were more thoroughly representative of the mill-owners than of the labourers. During this period, Mr. N. M. Lokhanday, editor of a local paper and chairman of the Mill-hands' Association, brought together the workers in two different meetings in 1884--23rd September, 1884 and 26th September, 1884. A memorial was drawn up and signed by 5,500 labourers. It was presented to the Mulock Commission and it contained the following demands * :—

(1) A weekly holiday.

(2) Half an hour's recess at noon on every working day.

(3) The limitation of working hours from 6-30 in the morning to sunset.

(4) The payment of wages not later than the 15th of the month following that in which they were earned.

(5) Adequate compensation for industrial accidents.

* Great Britain Parliamentary Papers, 1890-91, Vol. 59, paper 86, pages 106-108.

The main proposals of the Mulock Commission were the following :—

(1) The Commission were not in favour of special legislation for Bombay, the effect of which "would not only be anomalous but invidious." They favoured an All-India legislation.

(2) The factories should be maintained in a satisfactory sanitary condition. The law should be amended to include the following provisions :—

(*a*) Factories should be whitewashed every 14 months.

(*b*) They should be painted every 7 years.

(*c*) They should be adequately ventilated by means of fans.

(*d*) Standard plans for the construction of mills should be prepared by a special committee and new mills should be modelled on them.

(3) The labour of adult males should not be interfered with.

(4) Children and women should be protected. It was unanimously decided that no child should be allowed to work on any day before 7 A.M. or after 5 P.M. It was similarly resolved that the maximum working hours for women should be fixed at 11 and that they should not be employed before 6 A.M. or after 6 P.M. on any day. Both women and children were to enjoy 4 holidays in every month and to have an hour's interval for food and rest.

(5) Children below the age of 9 should not be employed and adult labour should not be exacted until the age of 14. "But any child, who could produce a certificate that he or she had passed a suitable and easy educational standard or put in a certain number of attendances at school, might be employed, if of not lower age than 8 years." * Again, "an exception to the rule should be permitted in the case of persons who had satisfied a certain educational test ; such persons should be treated as adults and allowed to perform the work of adults on reaching the age of 13 years." *

(6) No child should be allowed to work in a factory, unless duly certified by a certifying surgeon to be of the prescribed age and physically fit.

* Parliamentary Papers, 1888, Vol. 77, paper 321, page 19.

(7) Factory-owners should keep registers of children, showing the nature of the work assigned to them.

(8) It was held that all factories, in which 10 or more than 10 women and children were employed, should be brought under the operation of the Act. This clause was clearly aimed at ginning factories which employed women and children mostly, and the condition of which was awful.

The Governor of Bombay, while reviewing the report of the Commission, disagreed with their proposal that a child who had attended some school should be allowed to begin work at the age of 8. The factories cast a bad influence on the health of workers, and from this standpoint no distinction was necessary between an illiterate child and one who had put in some attendance at school. "What is bad from a physical point of view for the uneducated must be equally bad for the comparatively educated child." *

Dr Blaney and Mr. Bengalee added a minute of dissent. They were of opinion that the condition of adult males demanded legislative protection. In England, in those days, 74 per cent of the mill operatives in cotton mills were women, young persons and children. Only 26 per cent were adult males above the age of 18. In India, the women and children formed only 25 per cent of the mill operatives in cotton mills. Again, the women worked mostly as "reelers" and "winders"—departments, which could be treated separately from the main factory. Thus, the male workers could not get any relief, except through legislation. It should be noted that Doctor Blaney and Mr. Bengalee were supported in their attitude by the Mill-hands' Association which urged that the law should be applied to all operatives alike.

The Sanitary Commissioner, in his exhaustive report, stated that the condition of all mills was not so bad as it was depicted to be. All the same, he thought that improvements in ventilation, latrine accommodation, etc. were called for in many factories. He also suggested that they should be whitewashed every 12 months.

The Medical Committee came to the conclusion that there had been no marked deterioration in the health of the mill

* Parliamentary Papers, 1888, Vol. 77, paper 321, page 19.

operatives. The Mulock Commission took note of this point and remarked that the cotton industry was not sufficiently old to produce any marked impression on the health of workers. Notwithstanding, the Committee wanted the limitation of working hours, the raising of the age limits of children, the intervals of rest and the weekly holiday for all operatives.

The Governor in Council, Bombay, was favourably inclined towards the extension of the Act and wanted to go further than the recommendations of the Commission. He was of opinion that the Act should be applied to all factories where either 10 women and children were employed or where 20 persons, male or female, adults or minors, were at work. He thought that any further extension of the Act should embrace the whole of India and commended his views to the Central Government which, of course, declined to take any steps.

But an important event soon changed their mind. Mr. James Jones was appointed as the first permanent Special Inspector in Bombay in 1883. He returned to England after a service of 4 years when, at the suggestion of H. M. Chief Inspector of Factories, he prepared a memorandum on the condition of factories in Bombay. The memorandum appeared in the report of the Chief Inspector for 1886-87.* It was alleged that the Bombay operatives were largely overworked, that the machinery was greatly unguarded, that the mill-managers were inefficient and sometimes withheld wages from their workmen and that many factories were inadequately ventilated. It must be admitted, to the credit of Mr. Jones, that his report contained a bold confession that "half the concerns could compare favourably with mills spinning the same counts at home." † His memorandum had the desired effect. On the 3rd May, 1888, Lord Cross, Secretary of State for India, wrote to the Government of India for information on the following points :—

(1) The working of the Factory Act of 1881, with special reference to the plan of placing the work of inspection in the hands of the District Magistrates.

(2) Accidents in factories since the application of the Factory Act.

(3) The main drawbacks pointedly referred to by Mr. Jones.

* See pages 112-123. † Ibid.

Shortly after, Mr. Samuel Smith and Mr. James Maclean drew the attention of the Secretary of State, in a meeting of the House of Commons, to the long working hours in the Indian factories, the absence of a compulsory weekly holiday and the advisability of applying the English Factory Act to India. This was followed by another despatch to the Indian Government from the Secretary of State on the 26th July, 1888, asking if it would be expedient to legislate for the working hours of women and children and to close factories one day every week. The Government of India invited the opinion of the Local Governments, but none, except Bombay, advocated any further legislative interference.

On the 5th March, 1889, the following main proposals * of the Indian Government for the Amendment of the Factory Act were sent up to the Secretary of State :—

(1) The Act should be extended to all factories working with 20 or more labourers.

(2) The maximum hours of work for women should be 11 per day.

(3) The lower limit of the age of children should be raised to 9.

(4) The Local Governments should be empowered to enforce health and cleanliness in factories.

The Government of India thought it unnecessary to provide for a weekly day of rest even for women !

In the meantime, the Manchester Chamber of Commerce was not idle. On the 15th November, 1888, they † petitioned the Secretary of State for uniformity of legislation both in England and in India. On the 4th April, 1889, questions bearing on the same issue were put by Messrs. Graham and Mundella in the House of Commons. The Under-Secretary of State for India replied that proposals for amending the Indian Factories Act had been received and that the matter was under consideration.

On March 22, 1889, the textile and factory workers of Lancashire waited on Lord Cross, Secretary of State for India,

* Parliamentary Debates, May 16, 1889, 238.

† Parliamentary Debates, Feb. 5, 1889, 333, 232.

and asked for legislative interference on behalf of their fellow-workers in India. They said :—

"....... if the Indian mills were to be allowed to work night and day, Sunday and week days, it was obvious that the working men of this country must be placed under very great disadvantage in competition in the markets of the world."

The resolution of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce once again set the ball rolling. There was counter-agitation in India.* The Madras† and Bombay‡ Chambers of Commerce strongly protested against any external interference in Indian industries. But the Indian labourers too woke up and those employed in the spinning and weaving mills of Bombay sent up a petition to the Governor-General of India on October 24, 1889, reiterating their previous demands.§

The Secretary of State, by this time, had given his consent to the amendments of the Government of India and added a proposal of his own for a compulsory weekly holiday. A Bill was accordingly prepared and introduced in the Council of the Governor-General of India in January, 1890. This was followed by a host of protests from the Blackburn and District Chamber of Commerce, from Messrs. Samuel Smith and C. Graham. These led to a postponement of the Bill, which was once again referred to the Local Governments and Administrations for a further and fuller consideration.

In the meantime, an International Labour Conference was held at Berlin in 1890. Its recommendations were comprehensive in nature and had an influence on labour legislation in India. They included weekly holidays, the fixation of 12 years as a minimum age for factory children in the northern, and 10 years in the southern countries in Europe, and the prohibition of child work at night and in dangerous industries. An 11-hour day was proposed for women. They were not to be engaged in night work and were to enjoy an interval of rest for one hour and a half. They were also to be debarred from doing work for four weeks after child-birth. The hours of work for persons under

* Great Britain Parliamentary Papers, 1890, Vol. 53, H. of C. 384, p. 179.
† Great Britain Parliamentary Papers, 1889, Vol. 58, H. of C. 124, p. 29.
‡ Great Britain Parliamentary Debates, 1889, 333, 232–33.
§ Parliamentary Papers, 1890–91, Vol. 59, H. of C. 86, pages 106–07.

14 years of age were fixed at 6, and at 10 for persons between 14 and 16 years. They were further to be restricted to the day-time.

The resolution of the Berlin Conference gave a fresh ground for agitation. Mr. J. M. Maclean and Mr. Holt S. Hallett once again appeared in the press and demanded the enforcement of the Berlin resolutions in India. A similar attempt was made in the House of Commons through a series of questions. The commercial interests in India did not remain silent. The Calcutta Trades Association, the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Indian Jute Workers' Association and the Calcutta Hydraulic Press Association were all opposed to the Factory Bill, then pending with the Central Government. They took their stand mainly on the infancy of the Indian industries and protested against any external influence trying to introduce British legislation in India.

Mr. N. M. Lokhanday once again organised the workers. Ten thousand of them met on the 24th April, 1890, and demanded a compulsory closing of mills for one day in the week.* The Bombay mill-owners yielded to their request and decided to fix Sunday as a compulsory day of rest. In the meantime, the Governor-General of India, acting on the proposal of the Government of India, appointed a Commission on the 25th September, 1890, with Surgeon Major A. S. Lethbridge as its president. The Commissioners were advised to report on the following points † :—

(1) Limitation of the hours of work for women to 11 per day.

(2) The creation of a class of young persons and its definition.

(3) Limitation of the hours of work for children (9 to 12 years) to 9 per day.

(4) Provision of weekly holidays for women and children and the advisability of the same in the case of adults.

(5) The fixation of the working day for the male operatives.

(6) The advisability of adopting a compulsory interval of rest at midday.

* Great Britain Parliamentary Debates, 1890, 344, 810–11.

† Parliamentary Papers, 1890–91, Vol. 59, paper 86, page 110.

The Commission began its work in Bombay in the first week of October, 1890, and visited Ahmedabad, Cawnpore and Calcutta. It held 28 meetings, visited 34 factories and examined 96 operatives. It submitted its report on the 12th November, 1890, and made the following recommendations:—

(1) The working hours for women should be limited to 11 in any one day. The female operatives were opposed to any regulation of their work, and exception was consequently made by the Majority Commissioners in the case of those working with moving machinery. Otherwise, they thought, they were liable to be replaced by adult males or half-timers. Mr. Bengalee argued that this exemption was wrong in principle, as it would frustrate all attempts to restrain factory women from overtime.

(2) No separate class of young persons should be recognised by law. The maximum limit of age for children should be raised to 14 years as, at the limit of 12, it was impossible to tell accurately the age of a child who might be over 10 and under 13. The system had resulted in the employment of hundreds of children between 9 and 12 as full-timers and should be done away with.

(3) Nine hours' work for children, except in shifts, for 4 days, as in Bengal, was too long. It was recommended that, outside the shift system, the hours of work in the case of children should not exceed 6¾ in any one day. Again, with the reduction of working hours, no fixed interval of rest for them should be required by law.

(4) The workers, male and female, should have a weekly day of rest, preferably on Sundays. Exception should be made in the case of factories which, for technical reasons, wanted continuous production.

(5) A compulsory interval of rest extending over ½ hour should be given in the middle of the day.

Besides, the Commission put forward a number of other suggestions for the sympathetic consideration of the employers and the Government. These related to steam whistles, the payment of wages, compensation for accidents, elementary education for children and medical relief. The report ended with the following remark:—

". . . . We have been profoundly impressed with the vast and far-reaching benefits which the people of India are deriving from

the development and prosperity of the great industries which we have seen in our times throughout the country. It would, in our judgment, be a great calamity if, by any injudicious recommendations or unnecessary restrictions, the prosperity of these industries was endangered."

The report of the Commission was favourably received by the industrial and commercial community in India but it did not satisfy the aspirations of Englishmen in England. Some discussions on the statutory regulation of labour ensued between the Indian Government and the Secretary of State and on March 6th, 1891, the report of the Select Committee on the Indian Factories Amendment Bill was submitted to the Imperial Legislative Council. The Bill was passed into law on the 19th March, 1891, and came into force with effect from the 1st January, 1892. The Indian Factories Act of 1891 was a big advance on that of 1881. Its chief provisions were :—

(1) The Act applied to all factories employing 50 persons or more. The Local Governments were empowered to extend the Act to all factories employing 20 persons or more.

(2) A midday stoppage of work for ½ hour was enjoined on all factories.

(3) A weekly holiday was made obligatory.

(4) The working hours of women were limited to 11 in any one day, and the rest interval of 1½ hours was prescribed for them if they were employed for the maximum hours allowed by law. Night work was prohibited for them.

(5) The lower and higher limits of age for children were fixed at 9 and 14 respectively. Their work was confined to the day-time. They were not to be employed in dangerous work and were not to work for more than 7 hours.

(6) The Local Governments were empowered to make rules regarding sanitation and comfort.

(7) Provisions were also made for inspections and penalties.

The provisions of the Factory Act of 1891 did not satisfy either Manchester or India. The chief spokesman of Manchester, Mr. Holt Hallet, carried on a regular propaganda in England and broadcasted some mischievous rumours regarding Indian factory conditions. The restrictions on the employment of women and children were disagreeable to the Indian

employers, whereas the humanitarian urged for protection to adult male labour and for compensation to all workers in cases of industrial accidents. The Act of 1891 empowered Local Governments to make rules for the ventilation of factories and for the protection of the health of operatives. This gave rise to much difficulty in administration. The control of humidification in cotton mills left much to be desired. The sanitary condition was reported to be fairly satisfactory. The life of workers outside the factory precincts was extremely deplorable, and their houses were over-crowded and insanitary.

The steady industrial advancement of the country, coupled with the use of electric light and the shortage in the supply of labour due to plague, brought about long working hours and the employment of under-aged children. The percentage of registered accidents rose slightly. They were mainly attributed to the carelessness of workers, which was further aggravated by their predilection for loose clothing. Between 1901 and 1906, many of the accidents were due to disastrous fires in cotton presses, and it was considered that they could be greatly controlled by a more stringent law.

The Act of 1891 excluded factories which did not work for more than 120 days in a year. Most of the ginning factories thereby managed to escape the control of the Factory Inspector. Their condition was very wretched and demanded immediate attention from Government. Several other drawbacks were also observed in the Factory Act. The Safety provisions were inadequate. The intervals of rest were not often given and many other rules made under the Act were ignored. A serious defect was revealed in 1905, when the Bombay High Court decided that a manager was not an occupier and could not be punished for a breach of the Act. This ruling was alarming and would alone have been enough to move the Government to an amendment of the Act.

Accordingly, in September, 1905, a Bill for a further amendment of the Factory Act of 1891 was introduced in the Central Legislature. It sought to remove the evident drawbacks of the previous Act as regards the health and safety of workers and covered all ginning factories, whether working for more than 4 months or less. Curiously enough, no attention was paid to

excessive working hours and the exploitation of children. But these questions could not be overlooked for long. Early in September, 1905, the Bombay employers passed a resolution in favour of the restriction of working hours to an average of 12 per day all the year round. The resolution remained only a pious expression of opinion and the employers pushed on "early and late, grinding the life's blood out of their miserable hands in their insatiable lust for profits." *

The condition of affairs was very deplorable and sad. This time, it was the 'Times of India' which took up the cause of the downtrodden 'Bombay slaves' and exposed their condition in a leading article on the 16th September, 1905. The article dealt exhaustively with the condition of Bombay mills and ended with the remark :—

"But the system goes on, and no check is placed on the rapacity and greed that is working the life out of tens of thousands of hopeless, impotent people. The dividends roll in, the mill-owners pass pious resolutions, but the iniquity continues; the bitter cry of the oppressed workers is unheard. Let those who think the story is exaggerated watch, as we did, the saddening and unforgettable sight of these jaded and forlorn victims of the Moloch of gain hurrying to their work once more, after snatching a few hours' sleep, while

Beyond the darkness . .
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn
Unheeded"

In December, 1906, the Government of India, acting on a suggestion from the Secretary of State, appointed a Committee of Inquiry with Commander Sir H. P. Freer Smith as president. It was understood that, if the investigations of the Committee established the existence of abuses in factories, a representative Commission would be appointed forthwith. The inquiries of the Committee were limited to the textile mills and were to be particularly directed to the following specific points :—

(1) Whether the working hours of adult males should be limited, and whether the physique of operatives is affected by long hours.

* 'The Times of India'—Mail Edition, 16th September, 1905, page 8, column 1.

(2) Whether, before children are allowed to work in factories, certificates of age and fitness should be required.

(3) Whether the minimum age of children should be raised beyond nine.

(4) Whether, as the result of the employment as adults of persons between the ages of 12 and 14, there has been physical deterioration requiring the creation by law of a special class of workers known as young persons.

(5) Whether a separate staff of Medical Factory Inspectors should be entertained.

The Committee visited Bombay, Ahmedabad, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi, Agra and Nagpur. They were of opinion that factory administration was far from satisfactory. "Laws, especially those relating to labour may, if inefficiently administered, do little good; indeed, in many cases, may do harm. Employers of labour are apt to consider that where there is State intervention, they are relieved of their responsibility and that it is the duty of officials to see the law carried out."* The system of inspection differed in the different provinces, and it was therefore necessary that factories should be primarily controlled by one official under the supervision of the Department of Commerce and Industry. The Committee held that a separate staff of Medical Inspectors should be appointed to look into and supervise the general sanitary conditions. These included water-supply, ventilation, temperature and humidity of air, sanitary accommodation, investigations of, and reports on, accidents in conjunction with the special Factory Inspectors and the examination of women and children as to their physical fitness for work. Drastic reforms, according to the Committee, were needed in connection with the certificate of age and physical fitness. It was recommended that the certificate of each child should bear his thumb impression and an identification mark and that, before employment on full time, a medical certificate of physical fitness and age must be insisted upon. The Committee did not recommend the creation of a class of young persons or the raising of the minimum age for employment of children. Following the Berne Convention of 1906, they recommended the prohibition of

* Report of the Textile Factories Labour Committee of 1906, page 4.

night work for women. Regarding adult male labour the Committee were of opinion that "the period of employment in Indian mills, except those working on the shift system, should be fixed either between the hours of 5-30 a.m. and 6 p.m. or 6 a.m. and 6-30 p.m., that the engine should cease for half an hour between the hours of 12 noon and 2 p.m., that in mills working by day on the shift system the period of employment should, as at present, be between 5 a.m. and 8 p.m., provided that the actual period of employment for adult males should never in any one day exceed 12 hours, and that efficient means be taken to ensure that this restriction is duly observed."*

The Textile Factories Labour Committee thus noticed a number of drawbacks and were in favour of certain amendments in the Factories Act. This led to the appointment of the Factory Labour Commission with the Hon'ble Mr. (afterwards Sir) W. T. Morison as the President. The Commission were called upon "to investigate, in respect of all factories in India, the questions referred to Sir Hamilton Freer Smith's Committee, and the various suggestions and recommendations which that Committee had made." The Commission made a tour of the country, visiting important industrial centres, and their report gives a detailed and comprehensive account of labour conditions at the time.

The report, unfortunately, was not unanimous. The majority concluded that excessive hours (*i.e.* hours over 12 per day) were not worked except in textile and seasonal factories. The Commissioners unanimously agreed on the limitation of working hours for adult males. "It is clear," they agreed, "that no reliance can be placed upon any voluntary combination among millowners which has, as its object, the regulation of working hours, if the system proposed does not suit the convenience—pecuniary and otherwise—of the individual proprietors." But the majority did not favour any direct restriction. They thought:—

(1) that no case had been made out in favour of applying a principle which had not been accepted elsewhere;

(2) that direct limitation would impose on all factories a restriction which was only necessary in textile mills;

* Report of the Textile Factories Labour Committee, 1906 (Bombay, 1907), page 13.

(3) that it would not be possible to enforce such a restriction, because the area over which the factories were scattered was vast, the number of inspectors small and the employers in smaller factories were very imperfectly educated ;

(4) that a direct restriction would be repugnant to the great majority of capitalists and would check further investment, thereby hampering the growth of industry ; and

(5) that, if the working hours were limited to 12 or 13 per day, attempts would be made in the future to restrict them still further.

They were however in favour of indirect restriction of their working hours by :—

(1) "the formation of a young persons' class to comprise all young adults between the ages of 14 and 17, with working hours limited to 12 in any one day ;

(2) "the reduction of working hours of children from 7 hours to 6 hours ;

(3) "the prohibition of the employment of 'young persons,' women and children before 5-30 a.m. or after 7 p.m. ;

(4) "the substitution of a compulsory interval after 6 hours' continuous work in place of the present mid-day interval ; and

(5) "the assimilation of the restrictions placed upon the employment of women to those proposed for the young persons' class." *

They advocated these restrictions in the hope that their observance would make it impossible for any millowner to work his adult labourers more than 12 hours a day. But they went still further, and proposed that all factories which agreed to limit the working hours of young persons to 12 a day, should be exempted from provisions relating to them. Judging from the conditions of those times, the arguments of the Commission do not at all appear convincing. Dr. Nair alone pleaded for a direct restriction of working hours for adult males. Briefly, he was of opinion that :—

(*a*) adult male labour should be protected by legislation. Labourers were excessively worked, especially in the textile mills.

* Report of the Indian Factory Labour Commission, 1907-08, Vol. I, pages 33 and 34.

The long hours of work had affected their health and brought down the supply of labour. He was against the creation of a class of young persons and believed that the operatives suffered from want of combination. He suggested a 12-hour day for adults.

(b) women should be legally prohibited from work at night. He differed from the Majority Commissioners in their suggestion for "the raising of the hours of labour for women employed in factories from their present limit of 11 a day to 12 and the reduction of the present hours of interval or intervals amounting to 1½ hours to ½ hour."*

Dr. Nair exposed the hollowness of the arguments put forward by the Commission and concluded :—

"I beg to submit, with all the earnestness I can command, my recommendation to extend to the mill-operatives in India the legislative protection which they so earnestly pray for and which, God knows, they so sadly stand in need of."

The Commission were of opinion that the law relating to the half-hour interval was more often honoured in the breach than in its observance and that the rules with regard to the employment of women were generally ignored. Women were usually overworked. Children were also worked full time in entire disregard of the provisions of the Factory Act. Again, children under 9 years of age were worked half time. The Commission supported the Freer Smith Committee in concluding that no child should be allowed to work without a certificate of age as well as physical fitness. The statutory ages were to remain as before, but the Commission suggested a reduction of the upper limit to 13 in the case of such children as had obtained educational certificates and were certified to be medically fit for work.

It was further proposed that all seasonal factories, excluded from the operation of the Act on the ground of their working only for 4 months in the year, should be forthwith subjected to the Factory Laws. In consideration of the special circumstances of seasonal factories, women and young persons could be employed therein at night provided they did not work for more than 12 hours a day.

*Report of the Indian Factory Labour Commission, 1907–08, Vol. I, pages 104–105.

The Commission condemned the existing system of inspection in factories. According to them, the ex-officio inspectors had not the special knowledge necessary for the work, and full-time inspectors were therefore suggested for the efficient administration of the Act. "When we find in Calcutta, the head-quarters of a special Factory Inspector, that from 30 to 40 per cent of the children employed half-time in Jute factories are under the legal age of 9 years, and 25 per cent of the young full-timers are under the legal age of 14 years; that in 17 out of the 29 cotton factories visited by us outside the Bombay Presidency all the children under 14 years of age are regularly worked the same hours as adults; that factory inspectors admit that they know of the existence of these abuses and take no step to stop them; and that in many factories the provisions of the law for a mid-day interval and an entire stoppage of work on Sunday are more or less ignored; it is evident that, except at a few centres, the present system of factory inspection has proved a failure. The reason seems to us to be that Government has not appointed a sufficient number of full-time factory inspectors, and has depended too much on a number of ex-officio inspectors who have neither the time nor the special knowledge necessary for the work."* Besides full-time inspectors, the Commission suggested the co-ordination of the policy and work of inspection for the different provinces by the appointment of a Chief Inspector of Factories by the Central Government.

The report of the Factory Labour Commission gave much scope for criticism. It was referred to the different Local Governments and Administrations and opinions were invited from all bodies interested in labour. The employers' associations were mostly opposed to any further restrictions. A minority in the jute industry favoured legislation, and a certain amount of support was forthcoming for a proposal to exempt mills which did not use artificial light. Its great protagonist was Sir Vithaldas Thackersey whose arguments, however, did not appeal to the other members of the Commission. All the Local Governments, excepting Burma, were in favour of further legislative regulation.

The Bill "to consolidate and amend the law regulating labour in factories" was introduced in the Imperial Legis-

*Report of the Indian Factory Labour Commission, para. 107.

lative Council on the 30th July, 1909, and, at the same time, the Bill of 1905 was withdrawn. It was an entirely new Bill meant to set aside all existing legislation on the subject, and Dr. Nair's masterly minute of dissent had a great influence in shaping it. The Bill was circulated widely throughout the country for opinion. Its provisions related to textile and non-textile factories. In the case of the latter a compulsory mid-day interval of rest and a weekly holiday were laid down. As regards textile mills, the Bill comprised the following changes:—

(1) Limitation of the hours of adults to 12 per day, thereby avoiding the necessity of creating a class of young persons.

(2) Women's hours were maintained at 11 per day, but their intervals were reduced.

(3) Women and children should not be employed in any factory before 5-30 a.m. or after 7 p.m., unless there was an approved shift system in force.

(4) New provisions for an effective inspection and for maintaining the health and safety of labourers were also laid down.

The Bill was referred to a Select Committee who considered it in January, 1911. They retained the provision for the restriction of adult hours by a bare majority of 1 (8 : 7). The minority consisted mostly of employers, but five amongst them were prepared to retain the limitation of working hours in the case of factories using artificial light. The Committee also laid down definite criteria for exemption from restrictions by Local Governments in place of the vague exempting clauses in the Bill.

The report of the Select Committee was taken into consideration at a meeting of the Imperial Legislative Council on the 21st March, 1911. An eleventh-hour attempt to avoid direct limitation of working hours was made, but the proposals were either defeated or withdrawn.

The only amendment of interest was that made by Mr. Gokhale. He proposed that all factories, employing 20 children or more between the ages of nine and twelve, should be legally compelled to provide free and compulsory education for not less than three hours a day. The Textile Factories Labour Committee "noticed with great satisfaction in many mills throughout India that schools on the mill premises have been provided by the employers" and desired a general adoption of this practice.

The Indian Factory Labour Commission, on the other hand, was "most strongly opposed to the maintenance of schools within the factory enclosure. In many cases the mill school is used only in order to keep the children on the premises throughout the day, and they are forced to work—often for the full running hours of the factory—if the labour supply is short." These arguments were used against Mr. Gokhale's amendment. It was contended that education was a duty of the State and that it would be unfair to place such a burden on factories. The amendment was consequently withdrawn.

It should be remembered that the Scottish Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee did their duty towards their Indian fellow-workers during this time. In May, 1910, they submitted a memorial to the Secretary of State for India containing suggestions for improvement of the Bill and emphasising that its provisions did not go far enough. They proposed a reduction in the working hours of children to five, the raising of their minimum age to eleven and the reduction of continuous adult labour to five hours. They also suggested a 10-hour day for men and a nine-hour day for women. Lastly, they recommended that persons interested directly or indirectly in factories should never be eligible for appointment as Factory Inspectors. The last recommendation alone was adopted in the Bill by the Select Committee.

The Bill, as amended by the Select Committee and the Council, was passed on the 21st March, 1911. It received the assent of the Governor-General and came into force on the 1st day of July, 1912.

Under the new Act, Local Governments were empowered to appoint Inspectors and Certifying Surgeons for factories in their jurisdiction. Rules were made for the health and safety of labourers, for the lighting and ventilation of factories, for the purity of water used for humidifying purposes, for the fencing of machinery and for the prohibition of the employment of women and children in certain kinds of dangerous work. The periodical stoppage of work at least after every six hours was laid down by law. A weekly holiday for all employees was enjoined on factories. Special attention was paid to the textile mills, the adult workers of which were not to work for more than twelve

hours a day. Children were not to be employed for more than six hours in any one day. Further provisions related to notices and registers, to the power of making rules and to penalties and procedure under the Act.

The limitation of working hours for adult males was peculiar to India. In England there was no such restriction by legislation. There, the working hours of adult males were regulated by trade-union action. The conditions of England were and are still different from those of India, and it has therefore been found politic to come to the rescue of Indian male labour by a legislative measure.

The Factory Act of 1911 was attended by several reforms and no difficulty was experienced in enforcing the 12-hour day. A temporary depression in industry left no incentive for mill-owners to overwork their employees. The Factory Inspection Staff was strengthened everywhere and led to the removal of several abuses. But the double certification of children, attendant upon their poverty continued and assumed a serious form, especially in Bombay and Ahmedabad. This resulted in the appointment of a Committee by the Government of Bombay with powers to make investigations and suggest remedies. The Committee consisted of eight members, four of whom agreed on a free and compulsory provision for the education of half-timers, while the other four were opposed to it. It was believed that, if the hours of work for children were divided into two periods of three hours each with a sufficiently long interval for their education, the abuses of double employment would come to an end. The Bombay Government approved of the proposal and commended it to the notice of the Central Government for incorporation in the Factories Act. The proposal was however not favourably received in some provinces and was consequently dropped.

Another problem cropped up immediately after the passing of the Factories Act. Ventilation in textile mills was bad and had proved incapable of solution, especially in the Bombay Presidency. Shortly after the passing of the Factories Act of 1891, the Bombay Government laid down a standard of 10 square feet of lateral opening per worker. This proved impracticable and was abandoned. In 1911, a Factory Ventilation

Committee was appointed by the Government of Bombay. Some observations were made, but no definite recommendations could be formulated for lack of data in relation to health and the effect of work in hot moist atmosphere. The outbreak of war in 1914 upset the whole work and led to a temporary suspension of the enquiry.

The Act of 1911 altered the working hours only of textile factories. This was apparently due to the fact that textile mills were uniform in type and until recently, employed the largest number of labourers. It was therefore easy to design a law applicable to all of them. The conditions changed greatly after 1914. More factories were started and they absorbed a large number of people from rural areas. The Factory Inspecting Staff was not sufficient to cope with the situation. The average number of inspections per factory fell greatly during the War years, and several abuses became visible, especially in smaller mills.

The Act of 1911 exempted from all restrictions on female labour cotton ginning factories in which the number of women employed was "in the opinion of the inspector sufficient to make the hours of employment of each woman not more than 11 in one day."* This led to several evasions, and the Cotton Committee in 1918 said: "The evidence submitted to us showed that night working facilitates every kind of abuse." The Indian Industrial Commission Report of 1918 helped greatly to clear this point. "No industrial edifice," remarked the Commission, "can be permanent which is built on such unsound foundations as those afforded by Indian labour under its present conditions."†

* This was known as the "Khandesh formula": $\frac{G \times H}{11} = W$

"Where G represents the number of gins in the factory, H the total number of hours the factory works, 11 the number of hours a woman is allowed to work under the Factory Act, and W the total number of women to be employed."

Dr. Nair devised the following formula regarding the number of women available for work:—$X = W - (S + R)$,

"Where W represents the women who ought to be available for work, S represents the number of sweepers who are put on the register but never work in the gins. R represents the female relations of the Mukhadamie who are also put on the register but who have not the remotest intention of working in the gins and X the number of women who are sweated to keep the factory going for 16 or 17 hours."

† Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-18 (London, 1919), page 151.

The Commission noted a growing tendency in favour of a 10-hour day and commended the whole subject of factory hours to a minute examination by the Government. They further observed the dire necessity for improving public health and the housing condition of factory workers and recommended the introduction of compulsory primary education for all factory children. "If the workers' children", they wrote, "are provided with education under tolerable conditions of life, a new generation of workers will grow up, who will learn to regard factory work as their fixed occupation." *

About this time the Great War came to an end, and the long cherished idea of a permanent International Labour Organisation took a practical shape. In accordance with Article 23 of the Covenant, embodied in the Treaty of Versailles, it was resolved "to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions for the labour of men, women and children, both in their own countries and in all countries to which their commercial and industrial relations extend, and for that purpose to establish and maintain the necessary international organisations."

It is evident that equitable and fair conditions of labour in different countries were necessary for the maintenance of international peace. A permanent organisation was thereby drawn up consisting of :—

(1) a general conference of representatives of members of the League ; and

(2) an International Labour Office controlled by a governing body.

The First International Labour Conference under the Treaty of Versailles met at Washington in October, 1919. The agenda was as follows :—

(*a*) Application of the principle of the 48-hour week or 8-hour day.

(*b*) Women's employment:

1. Before and after child-birth, including the question of maternity benefit schemes,
2. at night, and
3. in unhealthy processes.

* Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-18 (London, 1919), page 151.

(c) Prevention of, or provision against, unemployment.

(d) Employment of children :

1. Minimum age of employment,
2. at night, and
3. in unhealthy processes.

(e) Extension and application of the International Conventions adopted at Berne in 1906 on the prohibition of night-work for women employed in industry and the prohibition of the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches.

India was an original member of the League of Nations and was represented by four delegates—Sir Atul C. Chatterjee, Sir Louis Kershaw, Sir Alexander Murray and Mr. N. M. Joshi. The first two represented the Indian Government, the third was a representative of employers and the fourth of the workers.

The conditions of India differed greatly from those of Europe and this fact was duly recognised in Article 405 of the Treaty of Versailles. The following paragraph appears in the Article :—

"In framing any Recommendation or Draft Convention of general application, the Conference shall have due regard to those countries in which climatic conditions, the imperfect development of industrial organisations or other special circumstances make the industrial conditions substantially different, and shall suggest the modifications, if any, which, it considers, may be required to meet the case of such countries."

The Draft Conventions, adopted at Washington with reference to India, resolved :—

(1) a 60-hour week,

(2) the prohibition of night work for women and for workers under 14, and

(3) the exclusion of children under 12 years of age in factories using mechanical power and employing more than 10 labourers.

In the meantime, the Government of India was not inactive. In Commerce and Industry Department letter No. 4495, dated the 20th June, 1919, they invited the attention of the Local Governments and Administrations to the recommendations and

suggestions of the Indian Industrial Commission with regard to factory hours and other allied questions. It was also explicitly mentioned that these questions would be discussed at the Washington Labour Conference in 1919.

The Draft Conventions and Recommendations of the Washington Conference were in due course conveyed to the Local Governments and Administrations.* The sudden outbreak of industrial unrest in 1919-20 was unprecedented in the history of India and paved the way for further industrial legislation. The demands of the strikers centred round the increase of wages due to a rise in the cost of living and the shortening of working hours. As a result of these strikes, a 10-hour day became the rule in most of the Indian factories, and the Bombay Millowners' Association petitioned the Viceroy in March, 1920, for a statutory restriction of working hours to 10 per day.

The opinions received from Local Governments showed that public opinion welcomed an appreciable advance in factory legislation. The question of the ratification of the Draft Conventions passed at Washington was taken up in the Legislative Assembly on the 19th February, 1921, and in the Council of State on the 21st February, 1921. The Convention regarding hours of work was approved of by the Assembly almost unanimously, but the subject of the minimum age of children gave rise to a heated discussion.

This resolution was subject to the following reservations :—

"(*a*) That it shall not apply to factories, employing more than 10 but less than 20 persons, unless the Local Government so directs;

"(*b*) that transitional regulations shall be made regarding children between the ages of 9 and 12 already lawfully employed in factories."

As the Honourable Sir Thomas Holland, while speaking on the motion, said :—

" . . . . the factories ought to be able to recast their organisation and their machinery to suit this new standard. The principal textile area employing children is Ahmedabad. There

* *Vide* Board of Industry and Munitions Letter No. 1-812, dated Simla, the 11th May, 1920.

are very few children employed, I believe, in Bombay and relatively few in other parts of India. But, in Ahmedabad, we know roughly the proportion of children of different ages who would be affected. According to a return which we had prepared last year, apparently 59 per cent of the children are between the ages of 9 and 11, between the ages of 11 and 12 about 20 per cent, while 21 per cent of children lie between the ages of 12 and 14. So that if we adopt the 11-year minimum, Ahmedabad will in time lose about a half of its child labour. But it will only be done gradually; and if we adopt the 12-year limit, it will lose roughly 80 per cent of its child labour."

The Draft Convention was carried, and it was also agreed that all factories, employing 20 persons or more and using mechanical power, should be brought under the Factories Act. These Draft Conventions came up in the Council of State and the employers of labour tried to secure a reversal of the Assembly's decision regarding the minimum age of children. But they failed.

A Bill was at last introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 1st March, 1921. It embodied the Draft Conventions and Recommendations of the Washington Labour Conference, as approved by the Indian Legislature. The important provisions of the Bill were as follows:—

(1) The definition of the term "factory" was changed to include all establishments using mechanical power and employing 20 labourers or more. The Bill empowered Local Governments to extend the Factories Act to all establishments, employing 10 persons or more, whether using mechanical power or not.

(2) The Bill provided for a 60-hour week and limited the daily maximum for men in all factories to 12.

(3) It excluded altogether children below 11 years of age from working in factories and proposed to raise the minimum age-limit to 12 years from the following year. The upper age-limit was raised from 14 to 15 years, and the daily maximum for children was fixed at 6 hours.

(4) In place of half-hour, the Bill provided for one-hour interval of rest for all full-time workers after six hours' continuous work. A weekly holiday, preferably Sunday, was enjoined on all factories.

(5) The old distinction between textile and non-textile factories was repealed.

(6) The Khandesh formula was repealed, and some minor amendments, relating to the certification of children and the health and safety of workers, were included. Exemptions based on further principles were also embodied in the Bill, and an additional provision for controlling the artificial humidification of factories was made.

The Bill was referred to a Joint Committee of the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State in March, 1921. The Committee did not meet till September, 1921, and this allowed enough time for public criticism. The labour unrest was still unabated. The public had been awakened to a consciousness of some of their duties, and there was naturally very little opposition to the Bill. The Joint Committee proposed very few changes. They reduced the daily maximum of hours for men from 12 to 11 and provided that two half-hour intervals may be substituted in place of one continuous hour "at the request of the employees concerned." They recommended the enforcement of these provisions from July, 1922, including the immediate prevention of the employment of new children under 12.

The report of the Joint Committee came up for consideration in January, 1922. The Bill passed through both the Chambers in the same month and came into force on the 1st July, 1922, as Act II of 1922.

The Factory Act of 1922 was applied to all industrial establishments using mechanical power and employing 20 persons or more. The Local Governments were empowered to extend the operation of the Act to factories working with not less than 10 labourers, whether they employed mechanical power or not. The treatment of exemptions under the old Act was not satisfactory; the new Act exempted only mines from its operations and based the other exempting clauses on definite principles. The principle of the 60-hour week was recognised for all factories, textile and non-textile, and the daily maximum was brought down to 11 hours. Child labour was raised from 9 to 12 years. The last reform was absolutely essential and would certainly have been very valuable, if these children had been subjected to compulsory primary education. The civilised world of to-day is

in favour of a higher age-limit, and it may not be long before 15 or 16 years may be accepted as the irreducible minimum. The upper limit for half-time labour under the Act was raised to 15 years. This gives an opportunity and should create a demand for facilities in technical and industrial training. The raising of age-limits would be a boon, if compulsory primary education, supplemented by necessary technical instruction, is introduced at once. It can further be justified in a different way. My experience of Indian factory conditions shows that it is rarely that a labourer* of more than 55 years of age is met with. Again, labourers of 40 to 55 years of age appear debilitated and nearly worked out. Thus it may well be imagined that a rise in the age-limit of children would result in the lengthening of their lives.

Under the Act, all workers were to have one hour's interval of rest after six hours' continuous work or two intervals of half an hour each at their own request. A weekly holiday was laid down, and no worker could go without a holiday for more than 10 days at a time. The workers were to receive at least 1¼ times the normal wage for overtime work. The fine for a breach of the Act was raised from 200 to 500 rupees, and the Courts were authorised to pay compensation to injured persons and their families out of the fines so collected. Women and young persons under 18 were prohibited from employment in certain lead processes, and the Governor-General in Council was empowered to make rules for the disinfection of wool infected with anthrax.

On the 1st February, 1923, the Honourable Mr. (now Sir) C. A. Innes came forward with a further amendment to the Indian Factories Act of 1922. Under it an employer could substitute for a Sunday a holiday on any one of the three days succeeding the Sunday. Again, the total number of working hours in a week was fixed at the maximum of 60, and the week was taken to commence from Sunday. This created a great difficulty which experience in the working of factories alone could bring to light. An example will make the situation clear. Supposing a religious festival falls on Saturday. The factory-owner lets off his workmen and asks them to work on Sunday

* In the Ahmedabad Enquiry into working class family budgets conducted by the Bombay Labour Office in 1926, it was found that "the bulk (85 per cent) of the male wage-earners are above 15 and below 45, while the bulk (86 per cent) of the women workers are above 15 and below 40."

instead. They work 10 hours daily but, in this particular case, they put in 50 hours in the first week and 70 hours in the second week, because the factory work commences on Sunday. In the two weeks together they put in 120 hours. But they have worked 70 hours in the second week, thereby violating the law of 60 hours a week. Thus Act IX of 1923 was passed by the Legislature to give effect to the desired alteration in the Act as it then stood. Along with other minor amendments, the following sub-section was added, namely :—

"(2) Where, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (1) any person is employed on a Sunday in consequence of his having had a holiday on one of the three days preceding that Sunday, that Sunday shall, for the purpose of calculating the weekly hours of work of such person, be deemed to be included in the preceding week."

The Act of 1922 provided that the artificial humidification of factories should not in any way injure the health of operatives and gave Local Governments power to prescribe standards of humidification. An enquiry into the possibility of controlling humidification, which was taken up before 1914, was suspended during the War. It was resumed once again in 1921 and the task was entrusted to Mr. T. Malony. His report on "Humidification in Indian Cotton Mills" was published in 1923 and helped the solution of a problem which was formerly considered to be insoluble. As the Government of India said :—

"In most factories the regulation of the atmospheric conditions has presented no great difficulty. But in the majority of cotton mills, the necessity for the employment of artificial humidification has proved a serious obstacle. It is necessary here to recapitulate the history of the question, because, in spite of the attention given to the subject by governments and employers and by more than one Committee, no satisfactory solution was reached. It has hitherto proved impossible to introduce regulations which would adequately secure the comfort and the health of the operatives in cotton mills and which would not injure very seriously the cotton mill industry and, in consequence, the operatives themselves."

Mr. Malony proposed the use of the Kata thermometer as a measure of comfort and the fixation of standards based on Kata

thermometer reading. The question of the fixation of actual standards in different centres is still a subject of investigation but it is no doubt true that Mr. Malony's report and recommendations have done much to improve the existing conditions.

The Act of 1922 provided that an interval of rest of one hour must be given after every six hours' work. This interval could be split up into two half hours at the desire of the workmen. The provision proved a source of trouble in Bengal where the workers used formerly to have an interval of half-an-hour only and where, according to the new Act, they were forced to stay for an additional half-hour in the factory to complete their time. Many of the workers came from a distance and the enforcement of the Act led to a few strikes. The employers and the employees approached the Government for a repeal of the new provision which was considered impossible of enforcement. The experience gained in other parts of India, especially Bombay, was quite contrary to this, and the Bombay Millowners' Association supported the local authorities in enforcing the Act. The Government of India invited the opinion of the Local Governments by a circular letter in which they wrote :—

" They doubt whether it is possible for a worker to maintain sustained work for 10 hours daily without intervals of rest amounting to at least an hour. They believe that the longer interval is desirable in order to enable the worker to maintain his vigour, and that its enforcement should ultimately prove beneficial to the employer. There are grounds for believing that the absence of sustained work, characteristic of many employees in this country, has been due, in part at least, to the fact that the hours fixed did not in the past allow sufficient opportunity for the rest necessary to prevent fatigue. Moreover, the Amendment of Section 21 of the Act was passed into law without opposition from any section of the general community in either Chamber of the Legislature, and the Government of India consider that very strong reasons should be advanced before the Legislature is asked to modify provisions which it has so recently affirmed."

The Local Governments were also asked to point out any administrative difficulties that had arisen in the enforcement of the Act. In response, the Chief Inspectors of almost all provinces met at Simla in 1924, and their proposals formed a basis

for an amendment of the Act. The Bill was circulated for opinion and was referred to a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly in February, 1926. It was passed into an Act in March, 1926, and came into force on the 1st June, 1926. The important changes which it embodied were:—

(1) The interval of rest for men working not more than 8½ hours a day could be reduced to half an hour at the option of the workers and the consent of the Local Government.

(2) It was declared an offence for a parent or guardian to allow a child to work in two or more mills on the same day. This provision strengthened the hands of Local Governments in stamping out the double employment of children—an abuse which appeared greatly in certain industrial centres, notably Ahmedabad.

(3) The Local Governments were empowered to prevent the cleaning of machinery while in motion and to secure a better reporting of accidents.

(4) Exemptions were made more elastic in certain directions. The definition of the word 'factory' was improved, and amendments were made as regards the register of workers. In the course of discussions* on the Indian Factories Amendment Bill, Mr. N. M, Joshi moved:

"That after clause 4 of the Bill the following new clause be inserted:—

"(1) In every factory a reasonable temperature shall be maintained.

"(2) In the case of any factory in which, in the opinion of the Inspector, a reasonable temperature is not maintained, the Inspector may serve on the Manager of the factory an order in writing specifying the measures which he considers necessary to maintain a reasonable temperature and requiring him to carry them out before a specified date."

The amendment of Mr. Joshi sought to reinstate clause 5 of the original Bill. The Select Committee, after a grave deliberation, omitted it, but an attempt was made once again to introduce

* Indian Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. VII, Part III, 1926, page 2621.

the clause in a meeting of the Legislative Assembly. A great discussion raged round this point. The question of "reasonable temperature" had not been scientifically investigated, and reliable standards for the guidance of Inspectors were necessary before such a measure could become law. Mr. N. M. Joshi's motion was looked upon as premature, and the House negatived it after a long debate. Another amendment to the Indian Factories Act came in August, 1926, when the Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra asked leave to introduce a Bill in the Legislative Assembly. The Bill aimed at the maintenance of a reasonable temperature in every factory. It also granted power to Factory Inspectors to insist on the managers' carrying out specified measures for maintaining a reasonable temperature in their factories. The Bill was the outcome of suggestions received from the Bombay Government. It was circulated for opinion on the 23rd August, 1926, but it died a natural death with the close of the term of the Assembly.

CHAPTER III

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS
and
WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT

THE Industrial Revolution, now at work in India, has brought to the forefront complexities of its own. The factory-owner is now placed at the head of a large number of labourers. He has no time to look to the needs of each individual worker: a gulf seems to separate the two. The worker, on his part, has not acquired the rudiments of knowledge necessary to enable him to insist on his rights. Though recently awakened from his torpor, he is not as yet cognisant of his true position in the economic world.

The use of machinery has brought in accidents, unknown and unheard of before. Some of them are inevitable under the present conditions; nevertheless, it is necessary to devise new means to minimise their frequency as greatly as possible. It is only during the past few years that a lively discussion has been aroused in the West on the question of industrial accidents. Accidents mean death, permanent or temporary disablement. In other words, they bring about loss of life and result in the crippling and maiming of many. They imply loss of wages, the extra expenses of training labourers for replacing the injured employees, the upkeep and maintenance of industrial wrecks, and the decrease in the earning capacity of partially disabled workers. Industrial accidents, in one word, mean waste—waste of money as well as of human energy. What are their causes?

It is often said of Indian workers that they attribute accidents to the ruling of 'fate' or '*kismet*.' This evidently means that they think that accidents are engineered by the mysterious power of God and that no human measures, however effective, can prevent them. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Our labourers could surely lay their finger on the immediate cause of an accident but, helpless and downtrodden as they are, they seek consolation by resigning themselves to the

Almighty God. 'It was so destined to be,' they generally say, but it never means that they assign any ill-will to God or look upon '*kismet*' as the originating cause of accidents.

Accidents, generally speaking, are partly due to the want of adequate safeguards against dangerous machinery, but it is wrong to suppose that all of them originate from it.* At a Safety-First Conference at Olympia (London), Mr. Gerard Bellhouse once stated that while adequate safeguards for machinery were essential, experience had proved that two-thirds of the registered accidents did not involve machinery at all. Again, of the remaining one-third, not more than a third could have been avoided by the use of better safeguards. Industrial accidents are thus only partly due to the lack of sufficient safeguards against machinery. But they are mainly accounted for by the psychological factor—the carelessness of the worker. The carelessness, by itself, may be due to several causes. It may be due to miscalculation or an erroneous judgment. It may be deliberate, as when a person does not intentionally take the necessary precautions when at work, or it may be due to the pleasure of excitement which the experiment affords. The psychological factor may take the form of ignorance on the part of the worker. He may not have any knowledge of the risk involved in a work and he may fall a victim to it. Last, but not the least, the worker may have been largely overworked. Long working hours, high speed of output, low wages, bad factory environments, and insanitary houses may have brought about his deterioration in health, and he may go about his work in a semi-conscious state. It is evident that, if ideal conditions were to prevail in industry, if proper safeguards were taken against dangerous machinery, and if the psychological factor were altogether eliminated, industrial accidents would be reduced to a negligible minimum. But, human beings as we are, our institutions can never be perfect. The ideal conditions can never prevail. We thus come to the conclusion that, under the present system of industry, the sovereign remedy for our problem lies in the advancement of mass education and in the formation of a definite code of 'Safety-First' devices as an essential concomitant to our industrial organisation. Some instances of the

* Article on 'Industrial Accidents' by E. J. Wallace in 'Industrial India,' Vol. I, No. 2, September, 1921, page 101.

results so far accomplished in the Western countries may here be usefully cited :—

"(1) The International Harvester Company, Chicago, a very large firm, whose experience is specially significant, because in this great corporation are included coal mines, logging camps, saw-mills, railroads, steel-mills, foundries, machine-shops and twine mills.

"During the first five years' experience in accident prevention work, deaths from accidents were reduced 60 per cent. In some of the larger plants, deaths and serious injuries have been reduced more than 75 per cent and in the steel-mill, employing 1,300 men, deaths and serious injuries were reduced 88 per cent. During the year 1915, the cost in compensation was only ¼ per cent of the pay-roll.

"(2) A large steel-foundry belonging to the Commonwealth Steel Company at St. Louis, employing 2,500 men.

"In 1916, 769 men were injured and lost time.

"In 1917, 371 men were injured and lost time, a reduction of approximately 50 per cent.

"In 1918, 124 men were injured and lost time ; a further reduction of approximately 60 per cent.

"In a word, five-sixths of the accidents were eliminated in three years. And whereas the firm five years ago was paying $35,000 to cover loss of accidents, during 1918 the total cost of compensation was $4,500. "I have made a larger dividend," the general manager remarked, "on my investment in safety, than I ever realised in making steel castings."

"These are American experiences where the accident rate has always been exceedingly high, and it may be advisable at this point to submit the following results attained by well-known companies in this country, as the result of their efforts in a similar direction.

"A manufacturer of a popular branch of margarine stated :—

"Although in 1920 we had 238 more accidents reported than in 1919, the number of working days lost, due to accidents, was only 625, whereas in 1919 the number of working days lost amounted to 1906. This means a saving in 1920, as compared with 1919, of 1,281 working days equal to £1,000 in wages."

"A large steel-works in the Midlands reported :—

"The interest of the work-people is well-sustained, and I am very hopeful that our percentage of accidents will continue to decrease in the same manner as it has done since we took the movement over.

"Following a decrease of 23.8 per cent after the first six months' 'Safety-First' work, a famous soap manufacturing combine issued the following statement :—

"The results of our organised accident prevention have surpassed the most sanguine hopes. In 1917 we had 101 accidents reported which gave a percentage of 1.59. In 1918, 88 accidents were reported giving a percentage of 1.13, while in 1920 we had only 59 accidents reported, which gave us a percentage of .73. It is to be noted that the number employed in 1920 exceeds the number employed in 1914 by 33 per cent. The above figures speak more eloquently than words." *

Safety devices are absolutely essential in factories. But, before they are launched, it is necessary to bear the following points in mind :—

(1) The demand for 'Safety-First' must come from the factory-owners. They must know and realise that the movement against industrial accidents is a business proposition. Every accident involves a levy on capital and should be avoided as far as possible. A line of policy should be drawn up and rigidly enforced; the manager, the superintendents and the foremen setting the precedent. It must be borne in mind that if they become lax and disregard their own rules with impunity, the scheme will defeat itself. The labourers generally follow their superiors and would naturally disregard the factory rules, when the latter do not put implicit faith and confidence in them.

(2) The workers should be taken into confidence and the 'Safety-First' rules enforced with their co-operation and consent. Wherever a Works Committee exists, the rules should be made and enforced through it.

(3) Wherever the size of a factory is large, and wherever the funds permit, a whole-time Safety Inspector should be appointed.

* Industrial Accidents by E. J. Wallace in 'Industrial India,' Vol. I, No. 2, September, 1921, pages 101 and 102.

In a small factory, on the other hand, the manager may combine this work with his own duties, or he may entrust it to some faithful, hardworking and intelligent subordinate.

It should be clearly borne in mind that the success of the 'Safety-First' depends very much upon the competency of the Safety-Inspector. His duties should be three-fold :—

(*a*) He should eliminate evident causes of risks and accidents and remove insanitary conditions.

(*b*) The labourers of India are mostly illiterate, and it is only in a few instances that they possess any journal of their own. But, wherever it exists, brief 'Safety-First' articles may be inserted in it in some prominent part for the guidance of workers. Lectures should be organised. Lantern shows should be held and all the different parts of machinery with the risks involved must be brought home to workers. 'First Aid' and 'Hygiene' lectures may also be given with advantage. 'Rescue' demonstrations should be held from time to time. Notices should be put up at every conspicuous place in the factory as well as at the place of danger, and the workers thereby warned against danger. The value of the bulletin board has not been recognised in an overwhelming majority of factories. It is capable of development, until it becomes a positive daily educative influence in establishing good-will and in advancing Safety-First rules.

(*c*) A complete record of accidents should be kept. A close scrutiny should be made in each case and the hour, the place and the causes of accidents should be noted down. This would greatly help the Inspectors of factories in laying down fresh rules for the guidance of the workers in the light of new experiences.

The prevention of accidents is extremely necessary in the present age of machinery. It holds up two bright aspects before our vision :—

(1) It is altruistic in character. Human life is precious—very precious indeed. It is incapable of measurement in money, and every attempt, however costly, should be made to save it. The factory-labourer is bound to his employer by a sacred tie, and it becomes incumbent on the latter to take every precaution

not to endanger the life of the former. "An eminent American manufacturer has stated that he would consider that every penny he had expended on 'Safety' work had been well-spent, even if a single life had not been saved or an accident prevented, because of the good feeling which had been engendered as a result of 'Safety' conferences between himself and his employees."*

(2) 'Safety-First' is a business proposition. Every accident costs something to the employer. He may have to pay compensation for death, for temporary or for permanent disablement. The introduction of 'Safety-First' devices brings down the number of accidents and results in some saving to the employer. Losses of wages are reduced to a minimum. Much time, which would otherwise have been lost, is saved and utilised productively. The efficiency of the workmen increases. They are saved the pangs of hunger and demoralisation, and they naturally put their heart and soul into the work.

An analysis of accidents† in a large Railway Works in Bombay was made in 1924 to find out the possibilities of the 'Safety-First' movement. Out of 746 reported accidents, 53 were caused by machinery in motion, 86 accidents were due to flying metals, 200 to falling weights on objects, 135 to hand tools, 34 to burns and 29 to persons falling. The average time lost per accident was about eight days. This clearly proves that a large number of accidents are preventible and that there is a great scope for the 'Safety-First' movement in India. The following figures relate to the classification of industrial accidents in the Madras Presidency from 1921 to 1926 :—

* Industrial Accidents by E. J. Wallace in 'Industrial India,' Vol. I, No. 2, September, 1921, page 104.

† Annual Factory Report for Bombay for 1926, page 10 :—

"Of the large number of accidents, 1573, reported from the Railway Workshops, 90 per cent were entirely unconnected with machinery and were due to factors within the control of the workmen themselves."

—	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926
1. Caused by machinery moved by mechanical power	132	115	155	154	126	121
2. Caused by machinery not moved by mechanical power ...	10	15	11	20	11	16
3. Belts	14	19	7	16	20	13
4. Emery wheels	5	17	7	10	11	16
5. Cuts	30	23	32	16	55	51
6. Circular saws	3	10	11	4	9	11
7. Falling weights	254	198	234	227	252	299
8. Carriage wheels	34	19	10	17	12	18
9. Burns	18	26	32	36	39	64
10. Hot liquids and molten metals ...	27	22	15	31	17	14
11. Flying splinters	156	127	110	94	128	125
12. Treading on splinters	18	18	2	9	14	11
13. Trapping between bodies ...	91	57	57	70	77	133
14. Falls	40	40	43	54	51	49
15. Missing the mark	18	15	9	18	17	18
16. Slips	66	71	37	57	39	41
17. Rebounding of bodies	...	12	18	19	6	7
18. Snapping of chains	...	2	3	1	4	...
19. Between Loom and Stay ...	...	2	2	...	6	44
20. Handles of hammer, etc. breaking.	...	...	...	5	4	10
21. Shuttles flying	...	...	...	4	1	9
22. Electric shock	...	...	...	...	2	1
23. Escape of steam and fumes ...	8	5	...	...	11	9
24. Miscellaneous	67	68	143	124	180	224
Total ...	991	881	938	986	1,092	1,263

They corroborate our conclusions still further. It is necessary to educate the worker to a sense of greater responsibility to himself and his co-workers, and this can be effected by the use of Safety posters—the adoption of different danger signs for different risks—prepared by Provincial Departments in co-operation with factory-owners under their respective jurisdictions. Some steps in this direction have already been taken in a few provinces but much still remains to be done.

Accidents in factories remain more or less at the same level. Stern measures are necessary before any improvement can take place. The tables given below give a rough estimate of the number and percentage of accidents officially recorded in the different provinces from 1916 to 1926.

PUNJAB PROVINCE

Year	Number of persons injured				Average per 100 operatives employed
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	11	13	166	190	.59
1917	8	38	165	211	.61
1918	18	19	123	160	.44
1919	17	38	186	241	.62
1920	14	23	202	239	.56
1921	13	36	277	326	.77
1922	8	26	286	320	.69
1923	9	34	363	406	.82
1924	17	15	488	520	1.20
1925	20	22	416	458	.85

UNITED PROVINCES

Year	Number of persons injured				Average per 100 operatives employed
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	8	193	431	542	0.79
1917	8	100	508	616	0.93
1918	8	83	637	728	1.13
1919	9	89	743	841	1.25
1920	5	117	634	756	1.08
1921	11	101	708	820	1.18
1922	11	90	750	851	1.16
1923	14	103	597	714	0.96
1924	12	87	807	906	1.17
1925	20	131	1,250	1,401	1.78
1926	12	141	1,484	1,637	1.96

BENGAL PRESIDENCY

Year	Number of persons injured				Average per 100 operatives employed
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	70	601	811	1,482	0.36
1917	53	445	1,053	1,551	0.38
1918	59	541	818	1,418	0.32
1919	49	432	657	1,138	0.25
1920	71	598	772	1,441	0.31
1921	60	534	824	1,418	0.30
1922	60	606	943	1,609	0.31
1923	76	627	967	1,670	0.31
1924	49	731	1,442	2,222	0.40
1925	79	709	1,692	2,680	0.48
1926	76	1,123	1,811	3,010	0.54

MADRAS PRESIDENCY

Year	Number of persons injured				Average per 100 operatives employed
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	5	9	396	420	0.46
1917	9	11	402	422	0.43
1918	9	6	394	409	0.41
1919	7	6	643	656	0.67
1920	6	5	733	744	0.73
1921	8	4	979	991	0.97
1922	13	6	862	881	0.80
1923	8	41	889	938	0.81
1924	11	196	779	986	0.81
1925	15	210	867	1,092	0.88
1926	15	267	981	1,263	0.99

BIHAR AND ORISSA

Year	Number of persons injured				Average per 100 operatives employed
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	15	133	489	637	1.86
1917	11	89	603	703	1.77
1918	23	181	695	899	2.07
1919	19	101	796	916	1.74
1920	38	148	740	926	1.66
1921	41	229	1,186	1,456	2.51
1922	17	249	1,007	1,273	1.85
1923	17	146	1,005	1,168	1.72
1924	43	160	1,010	1,213	1.73
1925	25	302	1,402	1,729	2.34
1926	54	366	1,803	2,223	2.03

ASSAM

Year	Number of persons injured				Average per 100 operatives employed
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	...	...	3	3	0.1
1917	1	1	2	4	0.12
1918	...	2	...	2	0.06
1919	...	1	3	4	0.11
1920	2	3	4	9	0.21
1921	1	2	...	3	0.06
1922	...	2	3	5	0.05
1923	3	5	1	9	0.02
1924	5	30	17	52	0.10
1925	10	30	30	70	0.17
1926	7	28	24	59	0.12

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

Year	Number of persons injured				Average per 100 operatives employed
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	23	87	1,102	1,212	0.42
1917	28	75	819	922	0.31
1918	39	128	698	865	0.23
1919	26	99	896	1,021	0.32
1920	33	108	768	909	0.27
1921	34	101	949	1,084	0.31
1922	42	88	980	1,110	0.31
1923	23	108	684	815	0.23
1924	82	170	2,354	2,606	0.74
1925	50	599	2,466	3,115	0.84
1926	49	875	3,060	3,984	1.04

DELHI PROVINCE

Year	Number of persons injured				Average per 100 operatives employed
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	...	...	...	...	...
1917	...	...	...	...	...
1918	2	4	8	14	.41
1919	...	2	8	10	.31
1920	1	3	13	17	.44
1921	...	3	7	10	.14
1922	3	3	8	14	.15
1923	4	7	8	19	.19
1924	22	3	15	40	.38
1925	4	9	27	40	.39

CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR

YEAR	NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED				AVERAGE PER 100 OPERATIVES EMPLOYED
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	
1916	4	55	154	213	.04
1917	5	40	96	141	.02
1918	4	45	151	200	.04
1919	8	69	118	207	.40
1920	7	51	139	197	.38
1921	8	54	145	195	.36
1922	16	60	149	225	.38
1923	8	40	190	238	.36
1924	11	62	191	264	.39
1925	10	50	193	253	.37
1926	5	35	203	243	.36

The actual number of accidents must have been much larger than the annual reports on the working of factories show. The factory-owners try to suppress facts as far as possible.* Warnings are given. Fines are inflicted. But this malpractice continues unabated. The main reason is that the inspection staff in the various provinces is not sufficiently strong to cope with the work. Moreover, the fine imposed on guilty persons is so small that it can never have a deterrent effect on factory-owners.† The above figures are further affected by the peculiar

* Annual Factory Report for the North-Western Frontier Province for 1920, page 2 :—

"No accidents were reported during the year, but it seems very improbable, taking into consideration the unguarded state of machinery in ginning factories that no accidents occurred during the last four years. Managers have been warned to report all accidents carefully in future."

Ibid. Report for 1921, page 3 :—

"One minor accident was reported to have occurred during the year. In spite of warnings, it is still very doubtful whether accidents are regularly reported, although no case of unreported accident was discovered."

Ibid. Report for 1925, page 4 :—

"It is feared, accidents still occur in Government factories which are not reported."

† Annual Report on the working of factories in the Punjab for 1922, page 7 :—

"The one instance during the year where a warning was not sufficient to meet the case was that of a serious accident due entirely to the neglect of the

position of the labourer. In several cases, he retires to his village when he contracts a serious disease. In this way, cases of sickness and death, which ought to have been reported from the factory area, are sent up through the rural agencies as indigenous to them. Moreover, the employer himself is anxious to see a diesased and disabled worker off. Thus, the mental state of the labourer and the personal interests of the factory-owner work in the same direction with the result that things take a course different from that recorded in blue-books.

In the case of minor accidents, a different tendency has, of late, set in and affected the accident figures greatly. The workers have now come to realise the importance of immediate treatment of slight wounds and submit to antiseptic dressing, wherever available, on the spot, thereby increasing the figures for minor accidents. Again, it was on the extent of injuries sustained that the Inspectors of Factories formerly classified accidents. Since 1925, the Government of India have notified that accidents involving absence from work for 21 days or more should be classed as 'serious.' This has resulted in a reported increase of serious accidents in places where leave on full pay to injured workers is the rule. "The Bengal-Nagpur Railway Workshop at Kharagpur shows an increase of 341 slight accidents. This is probably due to daily hands being paid full wages while absent on account of injuries and the liberal certificates granted by the railway doctors. The privilege of full pay while off-duty is taken full advantage of, as leave from 6 to 15 days is obtained on account of slight cuts or bruises. This is supported by the fact that very few accidents to piece-workers are reported. In this connection, it is interesting to note that in a large engineering concern in the Calcutta industrial area, only half-pay is allowed to persons who do not continue work after receiving slight injuries, with the result that the number of accidents reported is comparatively small."*

factory-owner. The accident was not reported and was only discovered during an inspection. Apart from the irregularity of not reporting the accident, the factory-owner and manager tried to cover up the accident and afterwards got the injured person to sign a document saying that the accident never occurred. These facts, after much trouble and time, were brought to the notice of the Court with the result that all the accused were convicted and fined Rs. 50 each."

* Annual Factory Report for Bengal and Assam for 1924, page 4.

It is no doubt true that there is a tendency for operatives to stay away longer than is necessary, but my experience shows that it is largely the outcome of bad factory conditions. The factory workers, as a class, have deteriorated in health and are naturally anxious to secure all possible intervals of rest, especially when they can keep away from work on full or half pay. The Annual Factory Report for Bombay for the year 1926 points out the extreme liberality of the two large Railway Companies in Bombay which allow full pay for absence due to accidents. This gives rise to a certain malingering on the part of injured workers, which is surely the inevitable outcome of their present unwholesome surroundings and environment.

The increased accident rate during the last two years may, to some extent, be attributed to the enforcement of the Indian Workmen's Compensation Act. Accidents are now better reported, at least comparatively. And further, a bulk of minor accidents are due to controllable circumstances and "a large number of them would not involve absence from work at all in other countries." *

Thus, the value of the tables given above is rather problematical. All the factors that directly or indirectly bear upon these figures do not run in the same direction, or affect them in the same degree. Moreover, the classification of accidents from province to province has not been based on any rigid principle, and any comparison based on these tables may well be misleading. Still, under these safeguards, a rough idea of their extent may be possible.

Accidents occur in several ways, and it would be useful to classify them under different causes.

(1) There are a large number of factories, *e.g.*, Railway Carriage Shops, where the labourers handle large quantities of paint. In these factories, therefore, there is a great risk of lead poisoning, and it is necessary that the operatives should cleanse their hands thoroughly before taking food. Many of the workmen are rather careless. To many, the idea itself is new. Special regulations are necessary to safeguard them against this danger. No case of lead poisoning has been so far officially

* Annual Factory Report for Bombay for 1925, page 11.

reported in the Punjab. It is due to the peculiar position of the labourer, but it does not imply that there has been no mortality from this cause.

An enquiry was made into the possibility of lead poisoning amongst adult workers in Bombay in 1922. No case of lead poisoning had been ever reported, but, as a result of the inquiry, one factory agreed to a periodical medical examination of its painters and to bring home to them the necessity of an improvement in their personal habits. Some defects were also noticed in the foundries and composing departments in the Bombay Printing Industry. Necessary precautionary measures to secure immunity from disease were considered to have been taken. "An analysis of the dust taken from a compositor's case showed that it contained seven per cent of lead. The type cases are cleaned in a very unscientific and unhygienic manner, but interest has been created in a modern dust extractor, and it is hoped that other firms will follow the example set by one press which is installing an extractor." *

The two large Railway Companies in Bombay agreed to a periodical medical examination of their employees engaged in the manipulation of white lead in 1923, "An accumulator repairer in one of the shops gave lay indications of lead poisoning, but it was not confirmed by the Railway Medical Officer or by the Medical Officer who made a further examination."

"An analysis of the polishing powder used in an optical works showed that it did not contain lead in dangerous quantity, but the firm complied with a suggestion to provide washing facilities."

"In two dyeing factories, where lead chromate dyed yarn is handled, women have not been employed on this work, since the Amended Act came into force. The firms were advised to fit special hoods under exhaust draught to remove the dangerous dust liberated in the processes and to serve as a protection to the men who were substituted. Both are now installing plant on modern lines to eliminate entirely the dust danger."†

The danger from lead poisoning is a real one, and we are still in an infant stage in the matter of protection to workers

* Annual Factory Report for Bombay for 1922, page 11.

† Annual Factory Report for Bombay for 1923, page 14.

from it. It is a fact that some of the smaller factories not using mechanical power and not registered under the Factory Act are amenable to this influence.* For example, very little lead chromate yarn is dyed in large registered factories, but it is understood that a considerable quantity of it is dyed in unregistered factories. Will the Central Government hold an enquiry into the nature of these factories and bring them under the control of the Factory Act? Will they also appoint a committee of experts and explore all possible avenues to check the harmful influence of certain manufacturing processes?

(2) The unguarded† state of machinery also brings about accidents. This was a great source of danger in the initial stages of factory legislation, but much improvement has been effected of late in the big works. Belts and pulleys are still greatly unfenced in some of the smaller factories (*e.g.*, rice and oil mills), and a proper enforcement of the Factory Act would certainly minimise the risks due to them. Steps have already been taken of late to educate the employees in the use and necessity of Safety devices. Progress in this direction is rather slow but it is bound to have good effect, if consistently insisted upon by the Factory Inspectors. The operative does not understand the full value of guards and other Safety devices, unless practical demonstrations are given to him. In 1925, an attempt was made in the Punjab to show to the workers the utility and significance of guards. The experiment proved successful, although the half-hearted co-operation of employers did not bring about the desired results. They are at times easy-going, and their tendency is to introduce cheap methods and materials regardless of efficiency.

In small works, unfenced machinery is the primary cause of accidents. Sometimes, the fencing that is in use is "imperfect, obstructive, and ugly."‡ At times untrained hands are employed to replace regular workers, and an increase in accidents invariably results thereby. This evil prevails largely in ginning

* Annual Factory Report for Bombay for 1923, page 15.

† Annual Factory Report for Bengal and Assam for 1923, page 4:—

"In the tea factories in Assam, the visits of Inspectors revealed the fact that practically nothing had been done for the protection of the employees. . . . . ."

‡ Annual Factory Report for Bihar and Orissa for 1921, page 7.

factories, where raw hands are put in charge of kapas openers, saw gins and the like, resulting, as a matter of course, in frequent accidents. "In textile factories, a number of the serious accidents are found among those workers who are comparatively new hands with little knowledge of the dangers involved in attempting to clean moving parts, or to remedy defects without first stopping a machine."*

The increase in accidents is partly attributable to the large expansion of machinery which has of late been a prominent feature of India. A large proportion of the workers are necessarily inexperienced, and, till they become accustomed to the machinery newly imported, accident rate will remain high. On some occasions, the mill-owners, for the sake of economy, buy machinery without the necessary guards.† This naturally results in a greater number of accidents.

(3) But a large number of the accidents nowadays result from carelessness either on the part of the labourers, the overseers, or the employers. Many of the accidents reported from the different works could certainly have been prevented with the exercise of proper supervision. A few examples would suffice.

(*a*) "A crane driver with four *khalasis* attempted to lift castings weighing 9½ tons under the supervision of a clerk who had no knowledge of the lifting capacity of the crane, with the result that the crane was overturned, killing the driver and injuring one of the *khalasis*.

(*b*) "A large circular tank was under construction. The floor of the tank was placed on wooden posts measuring 6″ × 3″ and 2½ feet long. The posts were not supported by packing blocks necessary for work of this kind, with the result that, when the side plating was being put on, the tank collapsed, killing two persons and injuring two others. It is obvious that both these accidents were due to the lack of proper supervision."‡

* Annual Factory Report for Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam for 1918, page 7.

† Annual Factory Report for Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa for the year 1920, page 7.

‡ Annual Factory Report for Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa for the year 1920, page 8.

Some accidents may be due to the ignorance of supervisors. "A fatal accident occurred in an unregistered workshop in Howrah. This accident was caused by the bursting of a Carbonic Acid Gas Cylinder while being cut in halves in an ordinary engineer's lathe. The Cylinders, when fully charged, carry a pressure of 900 lbs. per square inch; and as neither the manager of the workshop nor the person to whom the cylinder belonged, took any steps to ascertain whether the cylinder was charged or not, it is evident that they were ignorant of the purpose for which such cylinders are used." *

The ignorance of the workers also brings about several accidents. ". . . A Gurkha durwan, for some unknown reason, climbed up a high tension transmission post charged with 3,300 volts, and was electrocuted. The nature of these accidents illustrates the ignorance of the lower classes of labourers, of the dangers to which they are exposed." †

The removal or displacement of the guards by the workers is responsible for many accidents. The employers labour under the delusion that their duty ends with the provision of guards, and the labourers seem to think that they have got a right to risk an accident by tampering with them.

A noticeable feature of minor accidents in the railway workshops is that many of them affect the eyes of workmen.‡ These could easily be avoided if the workers were provided with protective glasses.

According to the Factory Act, the persons attending to transmission machinery are strictly enjoined to put on close-fitting clothes. The average operative is hardly mindful of precautionary measures and is invariably seen moving about in his loose trousers or *dhoti* and turban. The result is that he very often gets entangled in machinery and it is not a matter of surprise to hear of accidents from this cause. Some stress is now being laid in the different provinces on the use of close-fitting clothes and on the exclusion of unauthorised persons from

* Annual Factory Report for Bengal and Assam for 1923, page 5.

† Ibid., page 5.

‡ Annual Factory Report for Bengal and Assam for 1922, page 10:—

"Such accidents mainly occur in the repair shops where rivets have to be chipped out, or pieces of plating cut out by hand and the workmen are struck on the face by flying bits of metal."

the engine and boiler rooms. It is difficult to exclude children of tender age from accompanying their parents, and the order has consequently been restricted to children over two years of age. But things are not proceeding satisfactorily. Engine drivers and boiler men have often been noticed taking young children with them at the place of work where they are left alone to take care of themselves.

Sometimes, factories are hurriedly built and set to work before even the Factory Inspector receives an intimation of them.* It is no doubt true that dangers attendant upon bad design or construction or defective and bad materials are not prevalent in factories, but they have certainly been brought to light here and there. The new sections of the Factories Amendment Act of 1922 authorised Inspectors of Factories to order the disuse of dangerous plant, ways or buildings. They were enforced with advantage in the Bombay Presidency in the years 1923 and 1924 against badly designed and dilapidated structures.

A number of accidents are attributable in Bengal to the congested jute and gunny bale godowns. The ordinary rules of safety are sacrificed therein at the altar of 'economy of space.' Steps have recently been taken by the Chief Inspector of Factories "by having a bar with a large 'Danger' notice placed across the door of the godown when bales are being thrown down from the stacks." †

The shunting and moving of waggons in factory sidings also take their toll of the lives of workers. The supervision is bad and ineffective, and the workers engaged in shunting operations are very often ignorant of their duties. Very few factories in India provide any protected place for workmen to take their meals in. Thus, in the summer and rainy seasons, the workers are often seen taking their meals, with all the members of their families including children, under railway waggons standing on sidings in factory compounds. It is no wonder that accidents from this cause are numerous.

These are, in short, the prominent causes of accidents. In the face of their alarming number, compensation in some form

* Report on the working of the Factories Act in the Punjab for the year 1911, page 2. "Distillery, Amritsar. A fatal accident was caused by the tin-roof of the store godown being blown away in a dust storm. . . . ."

† Annual Factory Report for Bengal and Assam for 1923, page 6.

appears a necessity. Voluntary compensation has been in existence in India, although to an extremely slight extent. Some cases have no doubt come to knowledge—cases in which small amounts of money were doled out to dependants of workmen in the event of their death or disablement.

But voluntary compensation has never been systematic. It was purely philanthropic in character and generally took the form of a monetary provision towards the funeral ceremonies of the deceased. It is said that, in certain cases, a provident fund was in vogue. It was created out of unpaid wages and fines and went to maintain disabled workers. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that there are generally no records with factory-owners to show the definite amount of money spent by them on charitable compensation. They have been very slow in adopting Western methods of accountancy. Many of them still keep their accounts in the crude old way and make a cursory mention of their charitable awards in their books. It is, of course, impossible for one conversant only with the Urdu or the English language to decipher them. The accounts are generally kept in Hindi, Gurmukhi, Gujarati or Bengali. Some factory-owners, on the other hand, do not keep any notes at all. It is, nevertheless, an established fact that monetary aid to the injured has been in existence, though to a very slight extent. And, the Indian Factory Labour Commission of 1890 also came to a similar conclusion.

Miss G. Broughton (now Lady Chatterjee) mentions some instances of voluntary compensation in some Indian factories. She says* :—

". . . Besides providing treatment in cases of illness, some firms also give compensation in cases of accident. In the British India Corporation, an injured employee is provided with free medical treatment and full pay during absence, and if he is living alone a fellow-workman is deputed to attend on him. Permanently injured men are given special consideration. Aged widows of old employees are given monthly allowances, while young widows are given a lump sum varying between Rs. 100 and Rs. 300 which often serves as a wedding dowry. The Calico

*Journal of Indian Industries and Labour, August, 1922, pages 345 and 347.

and Jubilee Mills also give compensation in cases of accident, and so do the Empress Mills. At the latter place, half wages are given during absence caused by an accident, and employees who have sustained serious injuries are given light work when they return, but draw the same pay as they did at the time of the accident. In the case of fatal accidents, the heirs of the deceased receive a minimum of Rs. 300 and a maximum of Rs. 1,000."

These are the few instances in which compensation was voluntarily given to injured and disabled workmen. Some more cases may be easily quoted from other parts of India. But it must be understood that the whole system of voluntary compensation rested on the sweet will of the manager. In any case, no general policy was adopted and compensation varied in different cases. No compensation was allowed even in some of the advanced factories in many cases.

As far back as 1855 an Act, known as the Fatal Accidents Act, was passed by the Government of India, enabling dependants of a wage-earner to sue the employer in the event of the former's death. The Act suffered from several drawbacks and remained practically a dead letter. A suit in a civil court implied expense and waste of labour for several days. The dependants of a dead workman could ill afford it. Again, they lived with the employer in a semi-servile condition and could hardly dare to raise their finger against him. Some of the legal technicalities also stood in their way. For example, a factory-owner was responsible for the results of his negligence but not for those of his manager's. Again, if a labourer used a machine which was evidently dangerous, he was understood to have undertaken the risks involved and could not claim compensation for an accident.

The transitory provisions of the Amended Factories Act of 1922 as regards compensation were utilised in favour of the factory labourers by the Chief Inspector of Factories in the Bombay Presidency.* It must not be supposed that factory workers

* Annual Factory Report for Bombay, 1923, page 10 :—

" Great value is laid on the provision of light work for those employees who have been permanently injured in factories. In the past, a large proportion of mill and factory owners have fully met the moral obligation to provide for such unfortunate cases. Hard cases, however, have undoubtedly occurred and those will, in future, be remedied in the Workmen's Compensation Act which becomes operative in July."

did not realise the necessity of compulsory compensation. The demand for it dates as far back as 1884 when the Bombay labourers sent up a petition to the Government of India to this effect. In 1910, again, the Indian Workmen's Association of Bombay invited attention to it. The Great War was followed by a large number of strikes, and it was then and then alone that the question of compulsory compensation was keenly debated upon. Sir George Barnes, while speaking on the strike situation in 1920 at Lahore, announced the decision of the Central Government to consider the subject of Workmen's compensation. The matter was minutely examined in the Government of India Secretariat for about 18 months. A circular letter was issued in this connection by the Central Government to all Local Governments and Administrations on the 29th July, 1921. Two main questions were put to them :—

(1) Should an employer be liable to pay compensation for injury resulting from accident in the factory in the course of work?

(2) Should the statutory fixation of compensation be based on the Employers' Liability Act of 1880 and Workmen's Compensation Act of 1906 in England?

The Provincial Governments gave wide publicity to the compensation question and ample opportunity was afforded to the employers and the employees to express their views on the proposals. The Madras Government, the Government of the United Provinces, the Bengal Government and the Government of Bihar and Orissa were in full agreement with the Government of India. There were differences of opinion in the Central Provinces, but the prominent mill-owners were in favour of compulsory compensation and the Government too advised legislation on the lines proposed in the circular letter. The Punjab Government, after considering the replies of interested persons, advised cautious legislation. Besides the above Local Governments, the following Chambers considered the measure very desirable in the interests of the country :—

(1) Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

(2) Bombay Mill-owners' Association.

(3) Bombay Chamber of Commerce.

(4) Karachi Indian Merchants' Association.

(5) The Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau, Bombay.
(6) Karachi Chamber of Commerce.
(7) Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association.
(8) United Provinces Chamber of Commerce.

It must be noted that there were only two dissentient voices from the major Local Governments—Burma and Bombay. The Government of Burma dilated upon the peculiar features of India as contrasted with those of England, and deprecated any attempt to force new legislation to which the people were ill suited. The Government of India were, however, firm in their belief and were not at all influenced by this plea. The Government of Bombay differed not in principle but in method. They wanted a preliminary investigation to proceed before any steps for legislation were taken. This was, of course, fruitless. The circular of the Government of India issued on the 29th July, 1921 had been widely read and responded to. The replies received had touched almost every point and any further delay would have caused disappointment in the country, and entailed huge expense to the people.

The Workmen's Compensation Bill was at last introduced in the Legislative Assembly. It was referred to a Joint Committee of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly in September, 1922, and the employers and employees were adequately represented on it. The Bill based on their report was circulated to all Local Governments and to the commercial public. It has had on the whole a favourable reception.

The Workmen's Compensation Bill was discussed by the Legislative Assembly in its session in February, 1923 and passed into an Act in the same year. It came into force with effect from 1st July, 1924. The Act has been specially designed for India with special reference to its difficulties. The country is large. Its conditions vary from place to place. The labourers are illiterate, careless and unorganised. The number of qualified medical practitioners is very small. Last, but not the least, the industries are in a nascent stage and can ill afford to carry on their work under any financial handicap. These are the several difficulties which stand in our way. Due attention has been paid to all of them, and the Act has been so modelled as to render its working as smooth as possible, at least in the

present stage of our economic advancement. The Compensation Act is new to India; and cautious and tentative steps are necessary to secure the position of the labourers. They are, in their heart of hearts, agriculturists which is due mostly to the unwholesome condition of factories. It is therefore necessary that this factor should not prevent the labourers from getting their due, and a provision has been made in the Act to meet this purpose. The workers are moreover poor, and so the machinery for the redress of their grievances has been made as simple as possible.

The Indian Workmen's Compensation Act applies to the whole of British India, Berar and the civil and military station of Bangalore. It covers only a small portion of workmen. To quote the statement of objects and reasons prefaced to the Bill on its first introduction in the Indian Legislature:—

"Two criteria have been followed in the determination of the classes to be included:—

"(1) That the Bill should be confined to industries which are more or less organised.

"(2) That only workmen whose occupation is hazardous should be included."

The following classes are excluded from the operation of the Act:—

(1) The first class comprises persons "whose employment is of a casual nature and who are employed otherwise than for the purposes of the employer's trade or business."

(2) The second exception relates to persons who get more than Rs. 300 per month. They are not eligible to the advantages of the Compensation Act except when they are employed on manual labour.

Factory-workers have been brought under the operation of the Act, but the word "factory" is to be understood as in Section 3 (*a*) of the Factories Act. This section reads as follows:—

"Any premises wherein, or within the precincts of which, on any day in the year, not less than 20 persons are simultaneously employed, and steam, water, or other mechanical power or electrical power is used in aid of any process for, or incidental to,

making, altering, repairing, ornamenting, finishing, or otherwise adapting for use, for transport or for sale any article or part of an article."

Under Section 3 (*b*) of the Factories Act, the Local Governments have powers to extend the operation of the Act to any factory wherein not less than 10 persons are at work whether mechanical power is used or not. It must be clearly understood that the workers in such factories are not entitled to the privileges of the Compensation Act. Again, a workman, as far as the Compensation Act goes, must be either a manual labourer or employed on wages. Thus, apprentices who do not receive any wages, do not come under the category of "workmen" and are not eligible for any compensation.

Compensation to be paid under the Act will vary with the wages of the workers. Hence, it is necessary to have an exact idea of the word "wages." This would include all payments in money and all payments or concessions which are capable of being measured in money. Some privileges—e.g., hospital, etc.—cannot be estimated in money and cannot therefore be added to the wages of workers.

Section 2 (3) of the Act empowers the Central Government to extend its provisions to any occupation of a hazardous nature. This has already been availed of in the case of van peons, sorters, guards, and inspectors in the Railway mail services who have been brought under the privileges of the Compensation Act.

We have now seen in what cases the employers are liable to pay compensation in the event of an accident. They cannot evade their liability by entering into a separate contract with the workmen. Section 17 of the Act is definitely intended to safeguard the position of illiterate, poor and helpless labourers. It reads :—

"Any contract or agreement whether made before or after the commencement of this Act, whereby a workman relinquishes any right of compensation from the employer for personal injury arising out of or in the course of the employment, shall be null and void in so far as it purports to remove or reduce the liability of any person to pay compensation under this Act."

Compensation money may be paid to the workman direct or it may be deposited on his behalf with the Commissioner appointed under the Act. The employer may adopt either of these alternatives, but, in cases of fatal accidents, the money must be deposited only with the Commissioner, who will dole it out to the person or persons entitled under the Act.

A word about the circumstances in which compensation is payable. Section 3 (1) is clear on this point. "If personal injury is caused to a workman by accident arising out of and in the course of his employment, his employer shall be liable to pay compensation in accordance with the provisions of this chapter." It should be remembered that compensation is made payable only for the results of an injury and not for the injury itself. But what is an accident? Section 3 (2) of the Amendment Act, to be mentioned later on, indicated that, in certain cases, the contracting of occupational diseases comes under the category of "accidents." It reads:—

"If a workman employed in any employment involving the handling of wool, hair, bristles, hides or skins contracts the disease of anthrax, or if a workman, whilst in the service of an employer in whose service he has been employed for a continuous period of not less than six months in any employment specified in Schedule III, contracts any disease specified therein as an occupational disease peculiar to that employment, the contracting of the disease shall be deemed to be an injury by accident within the meaning of this section and, unless the employer proves the contrary, the accident shall be deemed to have arisen out of and in the course of the employment."

Excepting the occupational diseases, an "accident" must fulfil these two conditions:—

(1) It must be unforeseen and not deliberate or intentional.

(2) It must be sudden and not a slow and long-drawn-out process.

Further still, the accident must have arisen "out of and in the course of employment." This means that "if, when the accident occurs, the workman has any duty to the employer, if he is in any way subject to the employer's control, he will normally be acting in the course of his employment."* But a claim

* A. G. Clow: Indian Workmen's Compensation Act, page 48.

for compensation may not arise even if the accident takes place in the course of employment. The exceptions are :—

(1) No compensation is payable "in respect of any injury which does not result in the total or partial disablement of the workman for a period exceeding 10 days." Slight injuries are thus excluded as, otherwise, there would have been great risk of malingering on the part of workers and huge administrative expenses on the part of the Government and the employers. But, if the injury exceeds 10 days, compensation is paid for the remaining period and not for the "waiting period of 10 days."

(2) The second exception relates to the "workman having been at the time thereof under the influence of drink or drugs." The burden of proof lies on the employer and if he can establish that the accident would not have occurred had the worker not been intoxicated, he is exempt from the payment of any compensation. But other workmen involved in the accidents are eligible for compensation. If the accident is due to "the wilful disobedience of the workman to an order expressly given, or to a rule expressly framed, for the purpose of securing the safety of workmen," no compensation is to be paid to the wilfully disobedient workman. But, like the last exception, other labourers involved in this accident are fully privileged to compensation.

(3) The third exception refers to an accident due to the "wilful removal or disregard by the workman of any safety guard or other device which he knew to have been provided for the purpose of securing the safety of workmen."

The scales of compensation vary with the nature of the injury due to an accident as well as with the age of the injured party. They may be grouped under four headings :—

(1) *Fatal accidents.*—If an adult workman dies as a result of an accident, the compensation amounts to 30 months' wages, subject to a maximum of Rs. 2,500 and a minimum of Rs. 240. If a minor is killed, the compensation is a fixed sum of Rs. 200. This variation in the scales of compensation for a minor and an adult is due to the fact that the former will generally have no dependant, whereas the latter is expected to have a family to maintain.

Compensation money, in cases of death, is always to be deposited with the Commissioner, who will distribute it among

the workmen's dependants. Section 2 (*d*) means by "dependant" "any of the following relatives of a deceased workman, namely, a wife, husband, parent, minor son, unmarried daughter, married daughter who is a minor, minor brother or unmarried sister, and includes the minor children of a deceased son of the workman, and where no parent of the workman is alive, a paternal grandparent."

(2) *Permanent total disablement.*—This is caused when:

(*a*) a workman is permanently incapacitated from "all work which he was capable of performing at the time of the accident."

(*b*) a "permanent total loss of the sight of both eyes" is effected, and

(*c*) a worker sustains "any combination of injuries specified in Schedule I where the aggregate percentage of the loss of earning capacity, as specified in that Schedule against those injuries, amounts to one hundred per cent."

Compensation for permanent total disablement amounts to 42 months' wages in the case of an adult subject to a maximum of Rs. 3,500 and a minimum of Rs. 336. It is equal to 84 months' wages in the case of a minor, subject to a maximum of Rs. 3,500 and a minimum of Rs. 672. The minor is expected to live longer than an adult and hence the scale of compensation in his case is more liberal.

(3) *Permanent partial disablement.*—It indicates such disablement as reduces a workman's earning capacity in every employment which he was capable of undertaking at that time. The general scheme of compensation in this case is that it should be proportionate to the loss of income sustained.

(4) *Temporary disablement.*—Section 2 (1) (*g*) defines it as "such disablement as reduces the earning capacity of a workman in any employment in which he was engaged at the time of the accident." No compensation is payable for the "waiting period" of ten days, after which half-monthly payments are to be made by the employer. These are to continue for a period of five years, provided the labourer does not recover till then. Half-monthly payments are to be equal to ½ of his monthly wages in the case of an adult subject to a maximum of Rs. 15. In the

case of a minor, they are to be equal to one-third of his monthly wages subject to a minimum of Rs. 4. But if, during the period of disablement, the minor attains 15 years of age and becomes an adult, his half-monthly payments are to be increased to half his monthly wages.

As soon after the accident as possible, a notice is to be served by the workman or his dependants on the employer giving his name and address, the cause of the accident and injury received therefrom and the date on which it happened. The time of notice is indeed very important. It is to be given as soon as practicable and before the labourer has left off the factory in which the accident occurred. As the masses of our labourers are shrouded in ignorance, the Commissioner appointed under the Act can admit a claim "if he is satisfied that the failure to give the notice was due to sufficient cause." But, if a labourer seriously injured through an accident goes away to his home without offering himself for medical examination by a doctor appointed by the factory-owner and dies in the meantime, power has been granted to the Commissioner to allow compensation if he likes.

The Indian Workmen's Compensation Act will prove a boon to the factory labourers. It will make their position secure and go a long way in steadying the conditions of labour and in removing its migratory nature. Industrial life will become more attractive, and labourers, secure in their position, will become more efficient, thereby adding immensely to the sum total of wealth in the country. The Indian employer will also benefit, the more so, as there will be a steady and continuous source of supply for his factory.

It is believed that the Act, besides providing compensation to the worker, will act as a deterrent to the evil ways of mill-owners. They will, in future, think twice before they employ unskilled hands on dangerous machinery. The trend of events is in favour of labour, and one thing is pretty certain. The employers have now been put on their guard, and a large number of factories have insured against risks under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

The Workmen's Compensation Act was amended in 1926 under inspiration from the International Labour Conference held

at Geneva in 1925. It was amended to include compensation in connection with occupational diseases.

The Act stands forth as an evidence of the keen interest which the Government of India has ever evinced in the labour conditions of the country. Its success mainly depends on the liberality and breadth of view with which its provisions are worked by the Commissioners who have been awarded immense powers. They must be men of unimpeachable character and possess high judicial capacity. Letter No. L. 859, dated the 4th July, 1923, from the Secretary, Department of Industries and Labour, Government of India, addressed to the different Local Governments in the country thus expressed itself:—

"Under the Act the Commissioner has been invested, in some instances, with wide discretionary powers. He will have complete discretion, for instance, in regard to the distribution of compensation among dependants (Section 8). He has power to refuse acceptance of agreements (Section 28), and such provisions as those contained in Section 6 and Section 11 (4) require the exercise of judgment in matters in which law itself will give him little assistance. The intention of the Act is that the Commissioner should not content himself merely with the decision of such disputes as come before him in his judicial capacity. He should take a part in preventing the occurrence of disputes, and should be generally responsible for the protection of the rights of the parties. When a dispute occurs, it will be frequently desirable that he should visit the place of occurrence and settle the matter on the spot."

This point is no doubt very important and annual reports on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act show that, but for the personal inspection of the Commissioners, many things would never have seen the light of day. During the year 1925, the Compensation Commissioner at Bombay went out for local inspection in about 60 cases and those "facts which probably would have otherwise never come to light, not because of any deliberate attempt on the part of the employers to keep them back, but because they attached no importance to them, were noticed and utilised in arriving at a correct conclusion. In one case, however, where the accident resulted in causing personal injury to a minor in a factory in West Khandesh, local inspection alone in the company of the Chief Inspector of Factories

helped the Commissioner to unearth the facts about the employment of that minor. The minor was below the age of twelve years. As such, he could never have been certified for employment by a Certifying Surgeon. His name, therefore, did not find a place on the muster-roll of that factory. The visit to the factory, however, disclosed that employment of such minors was not uncommon in places which were far away from District towns." *

The letter of the Government of India is very clear on one point—the prevention of disputes. It is a pity that some Local Governments have misinterpreted the letter and hold that "the Commissioner's intervention comes in only when there is a dispute between the employer and the employed." † The employees are poor and ignorant and are sometimes deceived by the employers. Under such conditions, the Commissioners appointed under the Workmen's Compensation Act should look round and see that its provisions are justly enforced. The Commissioner plays a double role. He is a judicial officer and passes his judgment on different matters according to their merit. He is also a friend and adviser of the parties and is expected not only to settle disputes but also to prevent them.

During the year 1925, the Commissioner for Bombay found that his order for compensation in two cases was of "no use whatever to the unfortunate applicants, for the simple reason, that soon after notice of hearing of the application was served on the employers, they took steps to file their schedule in insolvency, and that nothing could be recovered, so far as the Commissioner knows, from that source. ‡ This instance brings out the necessity of a new provision in the Act, whereby the Commissioner may be empowered to attach the property of the employer through the executive officer of his district for the recovery of the claim. Will the Government of India look into it?

In the case of fatal accidents, some employers do not deposit the compensation money with the Commissioner as provided

* Report on the working of the Indian Workmen's Compensation Act in Bombay for the year 1925, page 3.

† Annual Report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in the Madras Presidency for the year 1926, page 1.

‡ Report on the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bombay for the year 1925, page 3.

for in the Act. This may be due partly to ignorance, and partly to the deliberate policy of the employers to hush up the whole affair with a small and inadequate amount of compensation paid direct to the dependants of the deceased. In Burma, for the year 1926, "compensation was paid in 34 cases of fatal accidents, but in four of these the amount was inadequate. This was due to the fact that the money was paid direct to the dependants of the deceased workman and not through the Commissioner as required by the Act." *

In the case of permanent disablement, again, the number of registered agreements does not very often agree with the total number of cases under that category. In the year 1926, there were 49 permanent disablements in Burma, but only 12 agreements were registered under that category. Compensation is often denied on trifling excuses, and when it is paid at all, it is never quite adequate to meet the situation. This applies largely to the case of small employers.

"There appears to be a tendency on the part of employers to get their injured workmen to accept compensation less than what is adequate. I have not been able to put my finger on any particular case, and hold that the amount is definitely inadequate, but there is no doubt that these injured men, if properly advised, would, sometimes by claiming compensation from the Commissioner, receive ampler compensation than they receive under the agreements. It is, of course, impossible for the Commissioners to say (without proof) whether in such instances the injuries were or were not sustained in the course of the workmen's employment." This is how the report on the Workmen's Compensation Act for the Delhi Province for the year 1926 depicts the condition of injured workers. Their illiteracy and lack of organisation are great obstacles in their way. The Compensation Act is not well-known to the skilled labourers, and the unskilled workers have got a very faint idea of it. † "As the Act has been in force . . . . for a comparatively short time, its provisions are as yet but little known, and some time will necessarily elapse before the workmen and their

* Annual Report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Burma for the year ending with December, 1926, page 2.

† Annual Report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Assam for the half-year ending with December, 1924.

relatives understand the benefits to which they are entitled." The annual reports of different provinces refer particularly to this difficulty and it appears essential that steps should be taken to advertise the benefits of the Act. This could be done by social agencies through popular lectures on the subject for the ignorant masses, and through the distribution of leaflets in easy readable vernaculars for the skilled workers and the employers.

The administration of the Act has brought several other things to light. It was thought at the outset that the only case in which the employer would get any of his money back "is the rare case when there is not a single surviving relation falling in the specified classes." * These cases are not so rare as they were considered to be. During the half-year ending with December, 1924, the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation in Lakhimpur (Assam) received a sum of Rs. 3,605-8-0, out of which Rs. 2,208 was awarded as compensation. The balance was not distributed as the heirs of the deceased could not be traced. In the Central Provinces and Berar, there were nine cases of fatal accidents in 1926 out of which the dependants of four could not be traced. In three cases in the Bengal Presidency for the year 1926, there was no dependant and the money was therefore refunded to the employers concerned. In one case in 1926 in Burma, the money was deposited, but subsequently repaid to the employer as no dependant was forthcoming. These are some of the cases in which the dependants of deceased workmen were not traced. This fact very naturally suggests the desirability of compulsorily registering the names and addresses of the nearest relatives of factory-workers. It is an established fact that labour in India is migratory. Much of it is employed in seasonal factories and disperses after a short interval. The employers benefit if the dependants of a dead workman are not to be found, and the Commissioners appointed under the Compensation Act have not been given the necessary means to carry out a searching inquiry into every case. In several cases, the dependants of a dead workman do not come forward spontaneously to put their claims before the Commissioners. † Thus, it is necessary that the

* Clow. A. G: Indian Workmen's Compensation Act, page 67 (Allahabad, 1924).

† Report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in the Central Provinces and Berar during the year 1926, page 2.

employer should forward the names of the dependants of the dead workman so far as they are known to him till the time when this compulsory registration becomes law. This will certainly help the speedy disposal of the cases.

A perusal of the reports on the administration of the Compensation Act in India brings another important fact to our mind. The waiting period in cases of temporary disablement extends to ten days. The illiterate workmen, who of course form the bulk of the factory population, resort to the clumsy methods of extendingthe w aiting period to a fortnight, or even more if possible, for the purpose of claiming some compensation. Would it not be advisable to curtail the period of "waiting" from 10 days to a week. The workmen may thus be induced to follow the instructions of the employers, as also of the medical practitioners, more vigilantly and carefully.

Under section 24 of the Act, the parties may be represented either by a lawyer or by a person authorised for the purpose in writing by the parties concerned. The employers have got associations of their own and are well represented everywhere. The workmen, on the other hand, have got very few effective unions. Those living in the town and island of Bombay are helped by the Bombay Claims and General Agency and the Social Service League. The Labour Union at Ahmedabad is a great support to its members. Some of the trade-unions in Bengal—e.g., the Bengal Jute-Workers' Association—further the cause and claims of their workers. Elsewhere, the workers are mostly unorganised and are not sometimes able to pay process fee and *batta* for the witnesses to be summoned. Under Rule 31 of the Government of India Rules, the Commissioners are empowered to remit the process fee or costs, but they have no such competence to meet *batta* for witnesses from the Government funds.

The Workmen's Compensation Act has been in force in India since July, 1924. The claims so far advanced under it are very few indeed. This is due to the fact that the labourers are mostly illiterate and are not as yet conversant with the procedure to be adopted in a compensation claim. The Act is quite new and the procedure is so long-drawn-out that the poor labourer is always glad to accept a small monetary compensation from the master, rather than bother to sue him.

The factory labourer is sunk deep in poverty and it is difficult for him to pay for the services of lawyers in anticipation of the realisation of compensation money. Not only that. It is difficult for him to prove his case by direct evidence. His colleagues, who may otherwise have helped him, are afraid of losing their job and desert him at the hour of need, in dread of the employer.

It is clear that the Act needs a great overhauling, and the Government of India have already addressed the Local Governments in this matter. In the meantime, the first instalment of reform has appeared in the form of the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act of 1929. The Amendment Act is confined to removing certain defects which were brought to the notice of the Government by the Commissioners for Workmen's Compensation, and the Standing Advisory Committee in the Industries and Labour Department of the Government of India. It thus refers more or less to questions of detail and does not attempt to deal with the principles underlying the main Act. The advantages of the Act have been extended to workmen working under railway contractors, and restrictions in connection with building trades and bridge construction have been removed. Under the original Act, workmen engaged in building and bridge construction got compensation only in cases of death or total permanent disablement. The Amendment Act extends full benefits to them even in cases of minor injuries. It has been further laid down that "no payment of compensation in respect of a workman whose injury has resulted in death and no payment of a lump sum as compensation to a woman or a person under a legal disability shall be made otherwise than by deposit with the Commissioner and no such payment made directly by the employer shall be deemed to be a payment of compensation." * A provision has been retained under which payment by the employer for funeral expenses or as advances to workmen up to a reasonable sum may be deducted before compensation money is deposited with the Commissioner.

* Please refer to the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act, 1929, Clause 4.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAW AND LABOUR UNREST

Labour unrest in India dates back to the year 1884, when Mr. N. M. Lokhanday organised a conference of the Bombay labourers and drew up a memorial, signed by 5,500 workers, setting forth their grievances, for presentation to the Bombay Factory-Labour Commission of 1884. Another petition for a reform in the factory conditions of Bombay was made in 1889, when the workers employed in the spinning and weaving mills urged for a Sunday holiday, for regularity in the payment of wages and for compensation for accidents. In April, 1890, a mass-meeting of more than 10,000 workers was organised. Two women addressed the meeting. A memorial was drawn up, laying stress on a weekly day of rest which was at once conceded by the factory-owners. Shortly after, the Bombay Mill-hands' Association came into being, with Mr. Lokhanday as its president. This was the first labour organisation in India which owed its origin to the untiring zeal and energy of Mr. Bengalee and Mr. Lokhanday. During the controversy, it was realised that the labourers should have an effective organ of their own, and a labour journal—'Dinabandhu' (the friend of the poor)—was consequently started.

These were the preliminary signs of labour unrest. They were all engineered by a few educated persons, and they succeeded in producing a favourable impression upon the ruling authorities. In the Factory-Labour Commission of 1890, the Government gave some consideration to the claims of labour and nominated Mr. S. Bengalee as a commissioner. He was one of the foremost philanthropists of his day in India, and the Factory Act of 1881 owed its origin mainly to him. The Commission was also assisted in its work by three local members, one each from Bombay, Bengal and the North-West (now United) Provinces. The demands of the workers were set forth in an address which the Bombay Mill-hands' Association presented to the Commission on the 8th November, 1890.

The workers as a class were without any genuine organisation of their own.* They groaned under several hardships. Two strikes occurred in Bombay in 1894, but they were of little consequence. The first big strike of mill-operatives, to be officially recorded, occurred at Ahmedabad in the first week of February, 1895. The Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association decided to substitute a fortnightly wage-system instead of a weekly one, which had been in force ever since 1869. This forced the weavers, over 8,000 in number, to leave work. But the strike was unsuccessful.†

A severe plague epidemic occurred in Bombay early in 1897. It took a heavy toll of the lives of workers who, with a shortage in their ranks, felt conscious of their power. They had formerly been paid on a monthly basis and, at this time, put in a plea for daily wages. The introduction of daily wages led to much inconvenience to the employers. The labourers sold out their labour to the highest bidder and thereby shifted from factory to factory every day, getting bonus in addition wherever they went. But the plague abated from April, 1897. On the 11th May, the Mill-owners' Association, Bombay, decided to discontinue the daily payment of wages. This led to several strikes which were mostly successful, and a partial continuance of daily wages was resumed. Fresh troubles arose on the 1st July, 1897. The mill-owners remained firm and decided to engage labour by contract, the contractor to be paid every month.

It should be understood that the common action of labourers at this stage was actuated by the ties of caste, kinship, or place of origin. The mill-owners tried to defeat it in several ways. They imported labour from outside as a set-off against local labour, but the newcomers joined the rank and file shortly after their arrival. Failing this, some of the employers hit

* ". . . . the Bombay mill-hands have no organised trade-union. It should be explained that although Mr. N. M. Lokhanday, who served on the last Factory Commission, describes himself as President of the Bombay Mill-hands' Association, that Association has no existence as an organised body, having no roll of membership, no funds and no rules. I understand that Mr. Lokhanday simply acts as volunteer Adviser to any mill-hand who may come to him." (Report on the working of the Factory Act in the town and island of Bombay for the year 1892, page 15).

† Annual Provincial Factory Report for Bombay for the year 1895, pages 5 and 6.

on the idea of housing their labourers in quarters specially built for the purpose, with a view mainly to secure greater control over them. The number of mills at Ahmedabad was every year on the increase. The supply of labour, on the other hand, did not come up to the demand. The workers naturally demanded increased wages, and, as a result, several partial strikes occurred at Ahmedabad. The result of these strikes is not officially reported, and it can well be imagined that they never succeeded. In 1907, the workmen of the Samastipur Railway Workshop (Bengal) applied for an increase in wages. Their request was not granted, and they struck work on the 4th December, 1907. On the 10th of the same month they returned to work, having succeeded in getting a famine allowance. Some petty strikes, chiefly for increased pay, took place in Bombay during this period. There was no strike of any importance in 1909. "Adjustments of wages with piece-workers are matters of frequent occurrence, where changes to fine or coarse counts in spinning and weaving come into force. When it means a reduction, there is often temporary dissatisfaction and a few operatives may leave a mill. Millowners rarely give way in these cases. Mill authorities are naturally not, as a rule, disposed to volunteer information affecting the internal working of their mills ; so that only prolonged strikes become generally known." * A few strikes occurred in Bombay in 1910. In Broach, the labourers of the Normada mills struck work as a protest against long working hours, night work and alleged personal grievances. The Government intervened, and a satisfactory peace was made between both parties. In the same year, the Bombay workers united themselves into an association known as "Kamgar Hitwardhak Sabha" or "Workers' Welfare Society." The Society exists even to-day and was founded by Messrs. B. R. Nare, S. K. Bole and N. A. Talcherkar. It supported the reduction of working hours to 12 per day and urged the claims of workers for industrial compensation and education.

These strikes continued from year to year, chiefly in the Bombay and Bengal presidencies. The main determining factor was everywhere the abundance or the scarcity of labour. Wherever the millowners found any difficulty in securing labour,

* Annual Factory Report for 1909 for the Bombay Presidency, page 2.

they tried to conciliate their workers, and were ever prepared to meet them half-way in their legitimate demands. The principal demand of the workers in these strikes was an increase in wages, but it was conceded only in a small number of cases.

This state of affairs continued up to 1914 when the outbreak of the Great War suddenly changed the entire situation of the country. Men and money were wanted very badly for its successful prosecution. This led to scarcity of labour for factories, which were mostly working to their full capacity to fill up the gap created by the War. The Nationalist Movement for the attainment of Swaraj had assumed huge proportions, and the atrocities of the Martial-law days and the tragedy of the Jallianwala Bagh dealt a heavy blow to vested interests. The people were roused to a consciousness of their self-respect, and the Workers' Revolution in Russia held out hopes of a new social order for the man in the street. Thus it was that these factors, supplemented by a tremendous rise in the cost of living, led to several strikes during the War and after. They were mostly successful, and the deciding factor in each case was the urgent demand for mill-labour and its relative scarcity due to War. "Labour strikes have been frequent for advances in wages but they were of short duration and adjustments of wages were readily settled owing to the general demand for labour." *

The spirit of revolt amongst the workers actively manifested itself in the year 1919. Several strikes took place one after the other. Sixteen strikes have been recorded in the Madras presidency in that year. The demands of the workmen related to an increase in wages, grant of bonus, rice allowance, reduction of working hours and extra holidays. There were 8 strikes in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Assam. There was a general strike of workers in Bombay, where the labourers gained an increase in wages. A few sectional and isolated stoppages occurred at Ahmedabad, but they were, one and all, very short-lived. The employers' policy was short-sighted throughout. They generally allowed the grievances to accumulate and removed them after the employees had actually struck work. The other provinces of India were not free from this trouble, and several strikes broke out here, there and everywhere.

* Annual Factory Report for Bombay for 1916, page 4.

An epidemic of strikes, unprecedented in the history of the Bombay presidency, broke out in 1920. The most notable of the strikes were the general mill strike in Bombay, the general spinners' strike in Ahmedabad and a general strike in Broach and Sholapur. The strikers wanted increased pay and a shorter working day, both of which were granted. A strike of great magnitude occurred in the Punjab where, in 1920, the railway workers held out and succeeded in getting increased rates of wages. 62 strikes are recorded in the Madras presidency, and the chief causes of disputes were inadequate wages, grain and overtime allowance, additional holidays and the reinstatement of dismissed persons. These strikes lasted for periods, varying from 4 hours to 104 days. The total strength of the factories affected was 43,126, of which 32,555 actually struck work. The demands of the workers were acceded to in 50 cases, whereas, in the remaining 12 strikes, they had to resume their duties unconditionally. Practically, all industries in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Assam were affected by strikes in 1920 due to a demand for higher wages. The workers succeeded in a majority of cases.

It was on the 1st July, 1920, that the Director of Industries, Bengal, opened out a record of strikes. The results for that presidency may be thus summarised * :—

July to September, 1920

Trade Groups	Number of disputes in progress	Number of employees involved	Aggregate duration in working days
Jute Mills	6	18,196	43,600
Cotton Mills	1	1,000	2,000
Port Railways	1	120	120
Docks, Jetties (Mechanical) ...	1	175	350
Printing Presses	8	1,526	91,521
Godowns and Depots ...	1	700	350
Tailors	1 †	10,000	50,000
Total ...	19	31,717	187,941

* Journal of Indian Industries and Labour—February, 1921, page 74.

† A strike common to about 1,500 labourers.

October to November, 1920

Trade Groups	Number of disputes in progress	Number of employees involved	Aggregate duration of working days
1. Jute Mills	6	38,500	189,500
2. Cotton Mills	2	2,000	4,000
3. Foundry and Engineering Works	9	15,770	114,140
4. Motor Works	4	900	12,125
5. Docking Works ...	4	5,548	42,735
6. Other Metal Works ...	3	800	2,050
7. Railways	1	10,000	10,000
8. Port Railways	1	200	600
9. Navigation	1	900	2,700
10. Cargo Handling ...	3	1,450	13,150
11. Docks and Jetties ...	3	590	4,600
12. Tramways	1	2,500	7,500
13. Gas Works	1	1,100	20,000
14. Jute Presses	3	2,150	9,300
15. Godowns and Depots ...	3	4,750	21,000
16. Municipal Employees ...	1	2,500	12,500
17. Shops	1	7	42
18. Coachmen	1	3,000	3,000
Total ...	48	92,665	468,942

December, 1920

Trade Groups	Number of disputes in progress	Number of employees involved	Aggregate duration in working days
Jute Mills	11	63,000	377,500
Cotton Mills	4	3,660	...
Foundry and Engineering Works	10	11,020	123,340
Motor Works	1	1,500	27,000
Docking Works	2	1,300	9,000
Cargo Handling	3	3,650	15,100
Docks, Jetties (Mechanical) ...	2	400	2,000
Godowns and Depots ...	1	2,000	16,000
Coal Mines	9	...	...
Potteries	2	400	...
Paper Mills	1	...	...
Oil Mills	2	...	...
Taxi Drivers	1	150	300
Municipal Employees ...	2	...	...
Cigarette Factory	1	16	48
Total ...	52	87,096	570,288

Note.—Of these 52 strikes, 30 involving 71,800 labourers were settled in December, 1920.

In 1921, the Government of India realised the necessity of collecting information, regarding strikes and their magnitude in the country from year to year. The following tables * relate to the year 1921 :—

* Journals of Indian Industries and Labour, 1921 and 1922.

TABLE I—Industrial Disputes during the First Quarter of 1921

PROVINCES.	No. of disputes.	Numbers involved.	Days lost.	DEMANDS.					RESULTS.				
				Pay.	Bonus.	Personnel.	Leave and hours.	Others.	Successful.	Partially successful.	Unsuccessful.	Not known.	In progress.
Bengal	49	88,473	1,259,148	31	2	3	3	10	4	24	16	2	3
Bihar and Orissa	5	17,678	127,112	4	...	...	...	1	...	4	...	...	1
Bombay	27	38,717	416,518	12	7	7	...	1	8	3	15	...	1
Burma	11	9,768	52,174	10	...	...	...	1	...	4	1	4	2
Central Provinces and Berar...	2	3,000	15,000	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...
Madras	7	8,198	157,808	2	1	1	...	3	...	4	3	...	...
Punjab and Delhi	4	1,610	77,660	3	...	...	...	1	...	2	...	...	2
United Provinces	11	17,807	484,905	2	5	3	...	1	...	1	6	...	4
Total ...	116	185,251	2,590,325	64	17	14	3	18	13	42	42	6	13

TABLE II.—Industrial Disputes during the First Quarter of 1921

INDUSTRY.	No. of disputes.	Numbers involved.	Days lost.	DEMANDS.					RESULTS.				
				Pay.	Bonus.	Personnel.	Leave and hours.	Others.	Successful.	Partially successful.	Unsuccessful.	Not known.	In progress.
Cotton and Woollen Mills ...	27	35,434	394,308	9	7	10	...	1	9	4	13	...	1
Jute Mills	9	38,300	168,700	2	...	3	2	2	1	3	4	1	...
Engineering Works	13	18,011	345,365	11	1	...	...	1	...	5	7	1	...
Railways (including Workshops) ...	10	27,310	805,710	7	...	...	...	3	...	1	5	1	3
Mines	8	15,812	82,058	8	...	...	...	...	...	7	..	...	1
Carriages, Tramways and Taxis ...	7	8,170	146,850	3	2	...	...	2	...	5	2	...	...
Municipal	6	5,406	16,518	3	...	...	...	3	...	6	...	...	1
Printing Presses	5	1,365	43,578	4	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	...	2
Shipping and Docks	5	6,340	33,734	4	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
Unskilled Labourers	5	2,199	2,249	3	1	...	1	...	2	...	3	...	...
Tanneries	3	4,225	121,250	1	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	2
Oil Works	3	10,743	145,820	2	1	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...
Posts, Telegraph and Telephone ...	3	925	20,335	1	...	...	...	2	...	2	1	...	...
Ordnance Factories	2	6,500	205,000	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	1	...	1
Cigarette Making	2	1,300	24,700	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	1
Miscellaneous*	8	3,210	34,130	4	2	1	...	1	...	2	3	3	1
Total ...	116	185,250	2,590,305	64	17	14	3	18	13	42	42	6	13

* This includes strikes in a sugar mill, a paper mill, a saw mill, three rice mills, a shellac factory and a strike of tailors.

TABLE III—Industrial Disputes during the Second Quarter of 1921

PROVINCES.	No. of disputes.	Numbers involved.	Days lost.	Demands. Pay.	Bonus.	Personnel.	Leave and hours.	Others.	Not known.	Results. Successful.	Partially successful.	Unsuccessful.	Indefinite.	Not known.	In progress.
Bengal	17	71,220	937,590	12	1	4	...	...	...	1	7	4	3	...	2
Bihar and Orissa ...	1	100	200	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Bombay	19	21,118	586,608	9	...	4	1	5	...	3	1	11	1	...	3
Burma	7	2,830	80,378	6	...	1	...	...	...	2	...	4	...	1	...
Central Provinces ...	1	1,070	12,840	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Madras	10	9,599	95,371	4	...	3	1	1	1	4	...	3	1	...	2
Punjab	2	1,300	55,800	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
United Provinces ...	7	15,195	345,870	2	4	...	...	1	...	1	2	4	...	...	...
Total ...	64	122,432	2,114,657	36	6	12	2	7	1	11	12	27	5	2	7

TABLE IV—Industrial Disputes during the Second Quarter of 1921

INDUSTRY.	No. of disputes.	Numbers involved.	Days lost.	Demands.						Results.					
				Pay.	Bonus.	Personnel.	Leave and hours.	Others.	Not known.	Successful.	Partially successful.	Unsuccessful.	Indefinite.	Not known.	In progress.
Cotton Mills ...	21	26,997	255,339	11	2	4	1	3	...	5	2	10	2	...	2
Jute Mills ...	5	48,000	157,500	2	1	2	...	...	...	1	2	1	1	...	...
Engineering Works ...	5	534	1,610	4	...	...	1	...	...	...	2	2	1	...	...
Railways (including Workshops) ...	7	18,311	726,004	1	...	5	...	1	...	...	1	4	...	...	2
Salt Mines	1	1,000	48,000	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Tramways	1	316	1,264	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Municipal	3	387	1,587	3	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	...	...
Printing Presses ...	4	940	24,420	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	1	2	...	...	...
Shipping and Docks ...	3	14,073	711,622	3	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2
Tanners and Leather Workers	2	3,975	103,350	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	1
Oil Works	2	1,200	26,400	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...
Ordnance Factories ...	2	5,000	42,550	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
Miscellaneous ...	8	1,699	15,011	4	1	1	...	1	1	3	2	3	...	...	...
Total ...	64	122,432	2,114,657	36	6	12	2	7	1	11	12	27	5	2	7

TABLE V—Industrial Disputes during the Third Quarter of 1921

PROVINCES.	No. of disputes.	Numbers involved.	Days lost.	DEMANDS.						RESULTS.					
				Pay.	Bonus.	Personnel.	Leave and hours.	Others.	Not known.	Successful.	Partially successful.	Unsuccessful.	Indefinite.	Not known.	In progress.
Bengal	30	25,185	173,776	17	2	2	1	7	1	5	8	11	6	...	...
Bihar and Orissa ...	2	460	460	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	...
Bombay	40	56,439	422,976	10	1	6	2	21	...	8	1	29	...	...	2
Burma	7	561	2,046	3	...	4	...	...	...	1	1	3	...	1	1
Madras	5	12,500	526,946	2	...	1	1	1	...	1	1	1	...	...	2
Punjab	1	1,800	5,400	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
United Provinces ...	3	880	2,080	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	1
Total ...	88	97,825	1,133,684	34	3	15	4	29	3	15	12	45	6	4	6

TABLE VI—Industrial Disputes during the Third Quarter of 1921

INDUSTRY.	No. of disputes.	Numbers involved.	Days lost.	Demands.						Results.					
				Pay.	Bonus.	Personnel.	Leave and hours.	Others.	Not known.	Successful.	Partially successful.	Unsuccessful.	Indefinite.	Not known.	In progress.
Cotton	33	53,616	710,569	6	1	3	1	21	1	4	2	22	2	...	3
Jute	4	15,400	130,300	...	...	1	1	2	...	...	...	4	...	...	...
Engineering Works ...	9	1,800	3,480	3	...	1	2	3	...	2	2	3	2	...	...
Woollen	1	1,800	5,400	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Railways (including Workshops) ...	5	16,074	255,224	1	...	2	...	2	...	1	1	2	...	...	1
Tramway	2	2,530	5,120	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
Tea Gardens ...	8	2,320	5,520	6	...	2	...	...	...	...	4	2	1	...	1
Municipal	2	640	1,960	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Shipping	1	400	4,686	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Printing	4	665	5,200	2	2	...	...	...	...	3	...	1	...	...	...
Rice Mills	4	448	1,723	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	1
Saw Mills	1	43	43	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Miscellaneous ..	14	2,089	4,459	10	...	1	...	1	2	2	2	6	1	3	...
Total ...	88	97,825	1,133,684	34	3	15	4	29	3	15	12	45	6	4	6

TABLE VII—Industrial Disputes during the Fourth Quarter of 1921

PROVINCES.	No. of disputes.	Numbers involved.	Days lost.	DEMANDS.						RESULTS.					
				Pay.	Bonus.	Personnel.	Leave and hours.	Others.	Not known.	Successful.	Partially successful.	Unsuccessful.	Indefinite.	Not known.	In progress.
Assam	1	2,000	2,000	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Bengal	39	58,258	253,727	24	...	8	...	7	...	1	4	28	2	...	4
Bihar and Orissa ...	3	4,050	80,300	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	1	2
Bombay	76	38,550	213,844	9	48	11	1	7	...	47	9	19	...	1	...
Burma	6	718	23,783	2	...	2	...	1	1	...	1	4	...	1	...
Central Provinces ...	2	712	14,464	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Madras	3	11,890	203,040	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	2	...	...	1
Punjab	1	300	5,700	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
United Provinces ...	1	1,169	2,338	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	132	117,647	799,196	40	49	22	1	18	2	49	16	54	2	4	7

Note :—"Information has been received of five other disputes but the information is not yet sufficiently complete to allow these disputes to be included in the tables for the quarter."

TABLE VIII—Industrial Disputes during the Fourth Quarter of 1921

INDUSTRY.	No. of disputes.	Numbers involved.	Days lost.	DEMANDS. Pay.	Bonus.	Personnel.	Leave and hours.	Others.	Not known.	RESULTS. Successful.	Partially successful.	Unsuccessful.	Indefinite.	Not known.	In progress.
Cotton Mills ...	72	44,356	418,640	6	49	12	1	4	...	47	9	15	...	1	...
Jute Mills	10	33,025	87,375	4	...	5	...	1	...	...	3	3	1	...	3
Engineering Works ...	4	6,570	30,100	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	1	1	...	...	2
Railways (including Workshops) ...	6	8,725	20,650	3	...	1	...	2	...	1	...	4	1	...	...
Tramways	2	2,500	67,500	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
Collieries	18	6,500	42,500	17	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	17	...	1	...
Motor Works ...	2	206	1,128	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
Rice Mills	3	432	16,212	...	...	2	...	1	...	...	...	2	...	1	...
Tea Gardens ...	1	2,000	2,000	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Printing Presses ...	1	212	9,964	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Tobacco Factories ...	1	1,500	16,500	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Lace Factories ...	1	550	41,800	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Miscellaneous ...	11	11,071	44,827	6	...	...	...	4	1	1	2	8	...	...	...
Total ...	132	117,647	799,196	40	49	22	1	18	2	49	16	54	2	4	7

These were prepared by the Government of India Labour Bureau, and the figures were based on information supplied by official reports and press accounts. Several strikes may have escaped notice, and the information as to the results could not in all cases be guaranteed, but the statistics are trustworthy enough for illustrating the extent of industrial unrest in the country.

One thing needs explanation here. The jute mills generally work from four to five days in a week, and a mill that loses time in a strike can make good the defect by putting on non-scheduled days. Thus, the apparent loss of working days in the case of jute workers is presumably greater than the actual loss. Again, the figures of persons employed and of days lost are only approximate. It is difficult, under the present conditions, to obtain reliable figures regarding them. In a large number of strikes, the workers do not return to duty at once. They go back in small numbers and, sometimes, some of those who return in the course of a strike, join the strikers again after a few days. The process of ending is long-drawn-out. "A factory may resume its normal, or pre-strike, work only after a long period during which the strikers return in small bodies, and new hands are engaged to make up the balance. It also happens that factories are reported to have resumed their normal work, when the post-strike strength is less than the pre-strike strength."*

The figures, again, include industrial workers in general and are not confined to factory-workers alone. They do not in all cases, however, take note of fresh information supplied after the figures had gone through the press. These points must be borne in mind while making a close study of figures given above, as also of those that follow.

During the year 1922, there were 278 industrial disputes in British India, as compared with 400 disputes in 1921. The total number of work-people involved was 435,434 as against 523,155 in 1921. The number of working days lost was 3,972,727 as against 6,637,862 in the preceding year. Of the strikes, 127 were due to a demand for increased pay, and 32 owed their origin to the question of hours. 34 strikes were successful, 25 were

* Journal of Indian Industries and Labour, August, 1921, pp. 357–360.

compromised; and the rest failed. The share of the principal provinces in the aggregate number of strikes is shown in the following table:*

PROVINCES	No. of disputes	No. of work-people involved	No. of working days lost
Bombay	145	159,963	763,111
Bengal	87	198,702	1,803,750
United Provinces ...	12	17,777	376,939
Bihar and Orissa ...	12	34,142	744,941
Madras	11	3,361	40,936
Burma	9	11,434	121,238
Central Provinces ...	4	9,208	102,986

"The number of strikes classified according to industries is 135 in the cotton industry, 41 in the jute industry, 13 in railways (including workshops), 10 in engineering and iron and steel, 8 each in oil-mills, printing presses and municipal industries, 7 in shipping docks and jetties, 3 in flour-mills, 2 in each of the following: tramways, saw-mills, paper-mills, sugar factories, ordnance factories, rope works and tanneries, and 31 in miscellaneous industries. The maximum number of working days lost in jute industries was 1,157,100, while the maximum number of work-people involved in disputes in cotton industries was 168,005.†

In the first quarter of 1923, there were 71 disputes in India, 35 of which occurred in Bombay and 23 in Bengal. About 33 disputes affected the cotton industry, and of these 21 were connected with pay and bonus. Eight disputes occurred in the jute mills of Bengal, 68,759 men were involved in all these strikes and they lost 617,005 days. Of the total number of strikes, only 16 were successful. During the second quarter of 1923, there were 22 industrial disputes in the Bombay presidency. Of these, 17 were for an increase in pay or bonus. Two strikes were successful, two were compromised and the remaining

* Labour Gazette, Bombay, April, 1923, page 23.

† Ibid.

failed. Two strikes occurred in Madras from April to June; both were unsuccessful. There were some strikes in Bengal and Assam. They were mostly of short duration and were due to a demand for higher wages. The strikers had to return to their duties unconditionally. In the third quarter of 1923, there were 42 industrial disputes, and only 6 of them terminated in favour of the employees. Bombay experienced 23 strikes, Bengal 10, Madras and United Provinces 3 each, and Burma, the Punjab and the Central Provinces one each. These strikes resulted in the loss of more than 326,000 working days and involved about 36,000 men: cotton and jute industries suffered the most. Forty-one industrial disputes occurred in the last quarter of 1923. Five of these ended wholly, and three partially, in favour of the employees and the remaining were unsuccessful. The number of workers involved was 29,000, and the number of working days lost was more than 255,000.

There were 56 disputes in 1924 in Bombay, resulting in a loss of 7,559,401 working days. 25 per cent of the strikes were settled in favour of the employees, 8 per cent of the strikes were compromised and the rest failed. Several strikes occurred also in Bengal and Assam. They started mainly from a demand for higher wages, but the employers remained firm all through. There were 10 strikes in 1924 in the Madras Presidency due to various causes. Most of them ended miserably for the workers. One strike occurred at the Cawnpore Cotton Mills in 1924 and lasted for 17 days. There were petty strikes in small industries in the Punjab. In the Central Provinces and Berar, the strikes were short-lived and ended disastrously for the strikers. "In the Badnera Mills, the strikers were paid off, and fresh labour was recruited." *

The year 1925 was one of the worst years in the history of industrial relations in India. The reported number of strikes was 134 as against 133 of the previous year. Thirty-three per cent of the strikes were successful in whole, or in part. The following tables † will prove helpful :—

* Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in Central Provinces and Berar for 1924, page 7.

† Indian Year Book, 1927 (Times of India Press, Bombay), pages 484 and 485.

Strikes in 1925 according to Causes and Results in Different Provinces

PROVINCES	Pay	Bonus	Personnel	Others	Leave and hours	Successful	Partially successful	Unsuccessful	In progress
Bengal	19	3	9	12	...	5	5	32	1
Bombay	33	1	24	11	...	8	15	46	...
Madras	3	...	...	1	...	...	3	1	...
Central Provinces and Berar	4	...	...	2	...	...	1	5	...
United Provinces ...	3	2	...	...	...	3	2	1	...
Punjab	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	1	...
Bihar and Orissa ...	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	1	...
Burma	2	...	...	1	...	...	1	2	...
British India ...	65	6	34	29	...	17	27	89	1

Strikes in 1925 according to Different Classes of Industries

CLASS OF INDUSTRY	Number of disputes	Number of work-people involved	Number of working days lost
Cotton Mills	68	173,339	11,054,132
Jute Mills	15	45,487	246,082
Engineering Works ...	7	5,067	154,111
Railways (including Railway workshops)	6	21,356	824,032
Woollen Mills	1	1,185	8,295
Paper Mills	2	923	17,268
Transport Services... ...	2	169	3,305
Printing Works	1	179	895
Conservancy	4	1,361	5,986
Dock Workers	4	4,151	151,911
Miscellaneous	24	17,206	112,112
All Industries ...	134	270,423	12,578,129

Strikes in Different Provinces of British India in 1925

PROVINCES	Number of disputes	Number of work-people involved	Number of working days lost
Bengal	43	60,185	511,279
Bombay	69	175,214	11,382,509
Madras	4	1,279	5,226
Central Provinces and Berar.	6	4,311	63,565
United Provinces	6	5,923	86,368
Punjab	1	11,487	375,234
Bihar and Orissa	2	170	170
Burma	3	11,854	153,778
British India ...	134	270,423	12,578,129

Industrial Disputes in 1925 according to Classes of Industries, and Causes and Results

CLASS OF INDUSTRY	CAUSES					RESULTS			
	Pay	Bonus	Personnel	Others	Leave and hours	Successful	Partially successful	Unsuccessful	In progress
Cotton Mills... ...	33	2	24	9	...	9	14	45	...
Jute Mills	4	3	4	4	...	1	1	13	
Engineering Works ...	3	...	2	2	...	1	...	6	...
Railways (including Railway Workshops).	3	...	1	2	...	1	2	3	...
Woollen Mills ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Paper Mills	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
Transport Services ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2	...
Printing Works ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
Conservancy	3	...	...	1	...	1	...	3	...
Dock Works	3	...	...	1	...	...	1	3	...
Miscellaneous ...	14	...	4	6	...	4	7	12	1
All Industries ...	65	6	35	28	...	17	27	89	1

During the year 1926, there was less industrial strife in India than in any year since 1920. The total number of working days lost was about eleven lakhs against an average of 74 lakhs per year from 1920 to 1925. The general causes of disputes in 1926 by provinces and by classes of establishments are given in the following two tables * :—

Causes by Provinces

PROVINCES	Pay	Bonus	Personnel	Leave and hours	Others
Bombay	27	1	22	...	7
Bengal	27	3	8	11	8
Madras	...	...	...	...	2
United Provinces ...	...	...	...	...	3
Bihar and Orissa ...	2	...	1	...	...
Central Provinces ...	3	...	...	...	1
Assam	...	...	...	...	1
Burma	1	...	...	...	...
Total ...	60	4	31	11	22

Causes by Classes of Establishments

CLASSES OF ESTABLISHMENTS	Pay	Bonus	Personnel	Leave and hours	Others
Cotton Mills	24	1	22	...	10
Jute Mills	12	3	5	9	4
Engineering Works ...	2	...	...	1	1
Conservancy	9	...	1	...	3
Railway Workshops ...	1	...	2	...	...
Oilfields	1	...	...	...	...
Oilworks	1	...	...	...	...
Printing Works ...	1	...	1	...	...
Tea Estate	...	...	...	...	1
Coalfields	1	...	...	...	...
Miscellaneous ...	8	..	...	1	3
Total ...	60	4	31	11	22

* Bombay Labour Gazette, April, 1927, pages 695 and 696.

The results of these disputes in the different provinces and classes of establishments may be thus tabulated * :—

Results by Provinces

PROVINCES	Successful	Partially Successful	Unsuccessful
Bombay	5	5	47
Bengal	6	7	44
Madras	...	...	2
United Provinces	1	...	2
Bihar and Orissa	...	...	3
Central Provinces	...	...	4
Assam	...	...	1
Burma	...	...	1
Total ...	12	12	104

Results by Classes of Establishments

CLASSES OF ESTABLISHMENTS	Successful	Partially Successful	Unsuccessful
Cotton Mills	5	6	46
Jute Mills	2	3	28
Engineering Works ...	2	...	2
Conservancy	2	1	10
Railway Workshops ...	1	...	2
Oilfields	...	...	1
Oil Works	...	...	1
Printing Works	...	...	2
Tea Estate	...	...	1
Coalfields	...	...	1
Miscellaneous	...	2	10
Total ...	12	12	104

The recurrence of strikes forced the Bengal Government in March, 1921, to appoint an Enquiry Committee. The Committee came to the conclusion that labour unrest was due

* Bombay Labour Gazette, April, 1927, pages 695 and 696.

mainly to economic grievances. In public utility services, it recommended the establishment of conciliation boards and suggested a panel on which the Local Government could draw, when forming a board to enquire into any dispute. In private disputes, the Committee suggested the establishment of works committees. "The idea of the panchayat," wrote the Committee, "as an agency for settling social and economical affairs is familiar in India, and a joint works committee organised on proper lines would supply a Panchayat for regulating industrial affairs, so far as they concern the workers."

In November, 1921, the Bombay Government appointed an Industrial Disputes Enquiry Committee, "to consider and report on the practicability or otherwise of creating suitable machinery for the prevention and early settlement of industrial disputes." The report was submitted in February, 1922, and constitutes a great contribution to the problem of industrial relationship. The Committee* thus summed up the main characteristics of Bombay strikes :—

"(1) The frequency of the strike without notice.

"(2) The absence of any clearly-defined grievance before going on strike.

"(3) The multiplicity, and sometimes the extravagance, of the claims put forward after the strike has begun.

"(4) The absence of any effective organization (except perhaps at Ahmedabad) to formulate the claims of the operatives and to secure respect for any settlement which may be made.

"(5) The increasing solidarity of employers and employed, and the capacity of the operatives to remain on strike for considerable periods despite the lack of any visible organization."

The recommendations of the Committee were of a two-fold nature—the prevention and the settlement of industrial disputes. For the purpose of prevention, the Committee recommended standardisation of wages, the free evolution of the trade-union movement, the recognition of unions by employers and their registration by the Government, the establishment of works

* Report of the Industrial Disputes Committee, Bombay (Bombay, 1922), page 2.

committees, the introduction of welfare schemes and the improvement of housing conditions. Regarding the settlement of disputes, the Committee agreed "that no outside agency, and in particular the agency of the State, should be used until all other means have been employed and failed, or unless it is invited by one or other of the parties to the dispute, or unless the situation is such that peace, order and good government are prejudiced. If such conditions should arise, then there should be formed an industrial Court of Inquiry, to be followed, if necessary, by an industrial Court of Conciliation." *

The importance of labour disputes led to the creation of the Labour Bureau with the Government of India. A Labour Commissioner was appointed in Madras, and the Bengal Government set up a Labour Intelligence Officer. The Punjab Government established a Board of Economic Inquiry, under whose supervision some industrial investigators have already finished their valuable researches. The Bombay Government took the lead in starting a Labour Board, the duties of which were three-fold :—

(1) *Labour statistics and intelligence.*—This relates to the general economic condition of labour, to its cost of living, wages, working hours, family budgets, strikes and lock-outs.

(2) *Industrial Disputes.*—The Labour Office will play an important role in the settlement of industrial disputes, as its activities develop.

(3) *Legislation and other matters relating to labour.*—The Labour Office will recommend new legislation, or the amendment of old laws, as conditions require.

As a result of the Industrial Disputes Enquiry Committee's report, the Bombay Government proceeded with a Bill to provide for inquiry into and settlement of trade disputes in 1922. The Bill was mainly based on the Industrial Courts Act of 1919 of Great Britain and was about to be introduced, when the Government of India engaged themselves on the preparation of a Bill on the same subject and asked the Bombay Government to hold the matter in abeyance pending further communication.

* Report of the Bombay Industrial Disputes Committee (Bombay, 1922) page 8.

A review of the industrial situation of India betrays the helplessness of our factory-workers. Their sad plight demands something of us—a guidance in the right direction. The formation of trade-unions is expected to go a long way in ameliorating their condition. A trade-union, according to Webb, "is a continuous association of wage-earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the condition of their working lives." Thus, from this definition, the spasmodic or passive outbursts of workers are ruled out, and it is upon the common interests that trade-unionism centres itself. The first and the last object is the condition of work, and if it is lost sight of, trade-unionism no longer remains.

It has been shown how strikes followed after the War and assumed the form of an epidemic. Several trade-unions were formed but most of them were only strike committees and ceased to exist with the cessation of strikes. Trade-unionism is a consequence of the separation of the employing and the labouring functions, and it cannot be formed, or if formed, cannot continue its existence without the following conditions:—

(1) Literacy and co-operation. It is evident that the literate labourers form a very small minority. This drawback greatly stood in the way of the workers and prevented them from forming a clear conception of their own position in the days gone by. But an awakening has come, and, with it, a consciousness of common interests. The labourers feel that their share in the production of wealth is an unfair one, and the system of large-scale production has furthered such a tendency. Thus, the idea of co-operation has already taken a practical shape, and it is bound to receive further stimulus with the growth of the right form of education.

(2) The public should be in sympathy with the cause of workers. Situated as the Indian workers are, they need the help and guidance of social leaders, imbued with the idea of honesty and single-mindedness. There is a great dearth of social leaders in India, but it is hoped that, with the lapse of time, capable workers willenter the arena of industry and guide the labourers in their difficult task.

(3) But the most important of all is the legal recognition of trade-unions. I have mentioned how unions sprang up in India

with a view to further the economic interests of the workers. Some of them had only a transitory existence, while most others suffered from lack of funds. Many of the trade-unions appeared on the scene, played their role for a short time and then vanished altogether. But this phenomenon is not an extraordinary one, and it is not peculiar to India. No country has been exempt from it. As Mr. Appleton, while tracing the growth of trade-unions in England, says*:—

"Hundreds of societies, therefore, sprang up in different parts of the country. Some of them had only a passing existence. The circumstances against them were too strong, or their only objective was an immediate amelioration of some particular evil. Often they were just formed to resist some immediate personal oppression, or to remedy some immediate local grievance. The particular task being accomplished, the union languished and not infrequently died out altogether. Others came to stay and formulated definite rules and policies."

This description fits in with the present conditions of India. The tables already given indicate the manifold causes of strikes. It is apparent that economic reasons are not the only ones which give rise to them. To illustrate this point still further, a typical list of non-economic causes of strikes in the Bengal presidency from July, 1920 to March, 1924 may be given as under:—†

(1) "Proposed arrest of weavers concerned in an assault upon a European assistant.

(2) "The arrest of a crane-man for removing a piece of wood.

(3) "Demand for recess for prayer (*namaz*) on Fridays.

(4) "Demand for a burial-ground by Muhammadan employees.

(5) "Arrest in connection with a fatal riot, in which a Gurkha durwan of the mill was killed.

(6) "Stoppage of a village pathway running through acquired land.

(7) "Transfer of a popular European assistant and appointment in his place of a Bengalee.

* W. A. Appleton: Trade-Unions (London, Philip Allen & Co., 1925), pages 79 and 80.

† Gilchrist: Wages and Profit-sharing (Calcutta, 1924), pages 266–268.

(8) " An altercation between the manager and the cook.

(9) " Demand for the release of non-co-operation volunteers, occasioned by a European depriving a cooly of a *Khaddar* cap.

(10) " Refusal of the manager to take back a worker who was arrested as a congress volunteer.

(11) " Demand for withdrawal of proceedings against an Indian worker, accused of assault on a European assistant manager.

(12) " The excellence of the local harvest.

(13) " The presence of elephants in the locality, supposed to be the vanguard of a Gandhi army.

(14) " Rumour that workmen of the mill concerned were assaulted in a recent shooting affray at a place about 30 miles distant.

(15) " Demand for permission to attend the trial of workers, prosecuted in connection with the volunteer (non-co-operation) movement.

(16) " Demand for immediate release of men, convicted in connection with a mill rioting case.

(17) " Demand for the release of men, arrested for disorderly conduct.

(18) " Prosecution and conviction for driving an unlicensed *gharri* and using a horse with a diseased eye.

(19) " Order prohibiting demonstrations in connection with the Turkish Victory celebrations.

(20) " Instigation by the Zemindar's agent who had a quarrel with the manager.

(21) " Men's refusal to carry foreign goods in their carts.

(22) " Frequent railway accidents by shunting engines caused a demand for specific hours for the work of loading and unloading.

(23) " Complaint regarding police prosecutions.

(24) " Demand for the disposal of cases affecting the staff by the manager and not by the departmental head.

(25) "Demand for the release of men, arrested on a charge of theft.

(26) "Police prosecution and conviction for using disabled animals for transport.

(27) "Demand for withdrawal of a theft case against employees.

(28) "Chastisement for bad work. Many strikes have been occasioned by this and also by threats of dismissal for bad work. European, Parsi, Punjabi and Bengali supervisors, foremen or overseers have been concerned.

(29) "Arrest of three sweepers for obstructing a public thoroughfare with carts.

(30) "A demand by the authorities requiring particulars (home address, etc.) of workmen."

Some of these non-economic reasons may easily be justified, and the long list should not be a matter of grave anxiety for us. The history of trade-unionism in other countries cannot but make us optimistic of the future. The Bombay Industrial Disputes Committee of 1922 sounded a similar note, when they said *:—

"We are fully aware that the early days of a trade-union movement are often full of difficulty. Strike Committees arise, calling themselves trade-unions and demanding the privileges of trade unions without any means of discharging the responsibilities thereof . . . . . . But these are the growing pains of trade-unionism; it is far better to treat them than to inflame them. We, therefore, express the very sincere hope that there will be, neither on the part of the State nor of Industry, any hostility to the free evolution of the trade-union movement."

An agitation for a Trade-Union Act began in 1920 when Mr. Sh. Saklatvala, M.P., waited in a deputation upon Mr. Montagu, then Secretary of State for India, and urged upon him the need of trade-union legislation in India. An assurance was given by the latter to the effect that early steps in the direction would be taken.** Thenceforward, the question became one of

* See Report, page 3.

great public interest. In March, 1921, Mr. N. M. Joshi moved the following resolution * in the Legislative Assembly:—

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he should take steps to introduce, at an early date, in the Indian Legislature, such legislation as may be necessary for the registration of trade-unions and for the protection of trade-unionists and trade-union officials from civil and criminal liability for *bona fide* trade-union activities."

This resolution was important, since it touched the status, rights and privileges of workers in the country. The number of wage-earners was yearly on the increase, and the labour movement in India was acquiring great strength day after day since the war of 1914. Several trade-unions had cropped up, although it may be safely said that some of them were merely farcical. Still, the few genuine trade-unions that existed had no well-defined position in law.

Until 1824, all trade-unions were treated as criminal conspiracies in England, and anybody who joined a union or took part in furthering its cause was liable to criminal prosecution. The Combination Acts of 1799–1800 were repealed in 1824, and, since then, trade-unions have been legalized. The position of trade-unions in India was undefined before the Trade-Union Act came into force. It is no doubt true that nobody had questioned their right to strike. But a strike meant withdrawal of labour which further implied a breach of contract of service. Thus arose the question of civil liability. In October, 1920,† "Mr. B. P. Wadia, who was for sometime the editor of 'New India' and who was the president of the Madras Labour Union was prosecuted in Madras. An injunction was issued against him prohibiting him from engaging himself in the activities of the trade-unions. The charge against him was that he induced some of the workers in the Buckingham Mills to commit a breach of their contract, and induced others not to enter into contract of service with that company. The Judge issued the injunction . . ."

This instance clearly shows that trade-unions were not free from civil liability in the eyes of the law. The English law is

* Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. I, Part I, 1921 (Delhi, 1921), page 486.
† Ibid., page 488.

clear on this point. The following section of the Trade-Disputes Act of 1906 protects the trade-unions and their officials from civil liability for a breach of contract :—

"Any act done by a person in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute shall not be actionable on the ground only that it induces some other person to commit a breach of contract of employment or that it is an interference with the trade, business or employment of some other person or with the right of some other person to dispose of his capital or labour as he will." *

The Honourable Sir Thomas Holland opposed the resolution. He admitted that trade-unions were inevitable and should be defined in their legitimate aims and objects. But the number of trade-unions existing in the country was much too small. "There are some associations, it is true, in this country, but possibly they could be counted on the fingers of one hand, that have a clearly defined constitution and a recognised membership, with audited accounts. . . . . . The English Legislation which Mr. Joshi quoted as our guide is not only legislation which we dare not undertake in India, but legislation which could never be passed in England, if a Bill were put before Parliament to-day."† The Honourable Sir Thomas Holland suggested that the few unions that existed could be registered under Act VII of 1913, which provided for the registration of associations formed for promoting commerce, science and charity without any claim or pretence of a dividend. A heated debate ensued, and the following resolution, as amended by the Honourable Sir Thomas Holland, was passed by the Legislative Assembly :—

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he should take steps to introduce, as soon as practicable, in the Indian Legislature, such legislation as may be necessary for the registration of trade-unions." ‡

On the 15th September, 1921, Mr. N. M. Joshi asked the Government the date on which they proposed to introduce legislation for the registration and protection of trade unions. Mr. A. C. Chatterjee (now Sir A. C. Chatterjee) replied that the question

* Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. I, Part I, 1921 (Delhi, 1921), page 419.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid., page 506.

was under consideration and that a Bill would be introduced in the spring of 1922, if possible. The Government took long to make up their mind, and it was as late as the 22nd January, 1925, that the Trade-Union Bill was introduced in the Legislative Assembly. The period of four years, which elapsed since the resolution of Mr. Joshi, was utilised by the Government in consulting the Local Governments, the employers' and the workers' associations. As the Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra said, "the opinions expressed . . . are remarkable for their diversity. There are some who consider the proposed legislation to be premature, and who would prefer that we should not proceed with it at all. There are some others who, while recognising the need for the proposed legislation, apparently consider the trade-unions to be dangerous and pernicious growths, whose activities should be controlled rigidly, so that they may not eventually overwhelm the commonwealth. There are others again, who regard trade-unionism as a new religion which, given sufficient licence, would bring about the millennium much more rapidly than any existing religions promise to do."*

It would have been impossible to prepare a Bill based on these conflicting opinions. "All that the Bill before the House contemplates is the adoption of certain preliminary measures to foster the growth of trade-unions in India on right lines."† The Bill was a purely permissive measure. It was left to the trade-unions to register. A great controversy centred round this point, and many of the employers as well as several Local Governments adhered to the idea of compulsion. Their attitude was the outcome of a misconception regarding the fundamental object of trade-union legislation, and they laboured under the impression that no trade-union would register unless compulsion was brought to bear upon them. The Local Governments which formerly advocated compulsion receded shortly after and accepted the permissive nature of the Bill.

The Bill excluded political objects from among the purposes of Trade-Union Law. An extract from the circular letter issued by the Government of India would form interesting study:—

"The question of the inclusion of political objects among those upon which funds can be expended has received careful

*Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. V, Part I, 1925 (Delhi, 1925), page 78.

† Ibid.

consideration, and, following the great majority of the replies received, the Government of India have decided to exclude such objects from the list. This will not prevent trade-unions, or their leaders, from advocating political policies, but it will ensure that funds contributed primarily for trade-union purposes, are not expended on causes in which the bulk of the members have little interest. If any sections of employers or employed wish to form an organization for political purposes and to raise subscriptions for that purpose, there is nothing to prevent their doing so, but there appears to be no strong reason for conferring in such cases privileges designed to protect organisations of an essentially different type." * As a protective measure, the Bill afforded immunity to trade-unions from civil and criminal liability. It was referred to a Select Committee on the 4th February, 1925. The Bill was examined clause by clause in the Select Committee. "The first important change made by the Select Committee in the original Bill is the insertion of the clause which is now numbered 16. This clause provides for the constitution of a separate fund to be formed from optional contributions and to be utilised for expenditure on specified objects for the promotion of the civil and political interests of the members of a trade-union." † The second important change related to the officers of a registered trade-union. The original Bill proposed that a majority of the officers of a registered trade-union should be persons actually engaged in the industry with which the trade-union was connected. The low educational standard of the ordinary labourer compelled a majority of the Select Committee to change the words "a majority" in the beginning of the clause to "not less than one-third."

The Bill, as reported by the Select Committee, was taken into consideration in the Legislative Assembly in January, 1926, and passed into an Act in February, 1926. It came into force from the 1st May, 1927.

The Indian Trade-Union Act is designed to meet the comparatively simple needs of a young movement in our country. It has been framed to foster the growth of trade-unions on right

* Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. V, Part I, 1925 (Delhi, 1925), page 743.

† Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. VII, Part I, 1926 (Delhi, 1926).

and sound lines. The Act gives immunity to registered trade-unions from civil and criminal liability. The Statement of Objects and Reasons contained in the Bill, as it was oringinally introduced in the Legislative Assembly, says :—

"Under the existing criminal law an agreement to do an illegal act is itself a criminal offence. 'Illegal Act' includes all acts which provide grounds for civil actions. Thus, for example, two men who agree to persuade workmen to break their contracts with their employers are guilty of criminal conspiracy. The clause which is similar in its effect to the corresponding provisions of the English Law, protects trade-unionists from prosecution for criminal conspiracy where the agreement into which they have entered is not an agreement to commit an offence."

Then, there is the immunity from civil action. I again quote from the Statement of Objects and Reasons :—

"The first part of this clause (Clause 18) corresponds to Sections 1 and 3 of the British Trade-Disputes Act of 1906 and protects trade-unions and their officers and members from certain civil actions. An important type of action which this clause will prevent is a suit arising out of the persuasion exercised on trade-union members and others to join in a strike where that strike (as is frequently the case) involves breach of contract on the part of workmen."

According to the Act, the accounts of a registered Trade-Union are to be audited every year under rules made by the Local Governments regarding the appointment of auditors. A fierce discussion raged round this point. Mr. N. M. Joshi opposed the appointment of auditors under rules framed by Government. He was of opinion that the Auditors should be appointed by the Unions, but his motion was negatived.

The general funds of a registered trade-union can, amongst other specified objects, be utilised on "the conduct of trade-disputes on behalf of the Trade-Union or any member thereof." * They can also be spent on "the payment, in furtherance of any of the objects on which the general funds of the trade-union may be spent, of contributions to any cause intended to benefit workmen in general, provided that the expenditure in respect of

* Indian Trade-Union Act, 1926, Sub-Clause (*d*) of Clause 15.

such contributions in any financial year shall not, at any time during that year, be in excess of one-fourth of the combined total of the gross income, which has up to that time accrued to the general funds of the trade-union during that year, and of the balance at the credit of those funds at the commencement of that year." *

A provision has been made in the Act, according to which not less than one-half of the total officers of a registered trade-union shall be persons "actually engaged or employed in an industry with which the trade-union is concerned," subject to a proviso "that the Local Government may, by special or general order, declare that the provisions of this Section (Section 22) shall not apply to any trade-union or class of trade-unions specified in the order." This clause clearly recognises the infancy of the trade-union movement in this country and the comparatively uneducated condition of our workers. It is thus essential that outsiders should come in to help the trade-unionists in the execution of their task. But the number of external officers has been limited to one-half of the total number of officers. This is based on the principle that the worker is the best judge of his own interests and that it is very desirable that he should have ample opportunities of educating himself in the safe conduct of trade-union affairs.

A political clause has been inserted in the Act. It was not embodied in the Bill, as originally drafted, but it found its way as a result of the deliberations of the Select Committee. It was urged that the political clause was absolutely essential to awaken the labourers and to enable them to spend their money in securing the candidature of their representatives on political bodies. The labourites wanted to go still further and desired to adopt the full provisions of the English Law on the subject, as it stood before 1925. As the Honourable Mr. A. H. Ley, Secretary for Industries and Labour, while speaking on the Trade-Union Bill in the Council of State on the 25th February, 1925, said :—

"The Bill does not go as far as the English Law on the subject. The English Law which was introduced in 1913 provides that if a trade-union by a resolution passed on a ballot of the members chooses to establish a political fund it may do

* Indian Trade-Union Act, Sub-clause (*j*) of Clause 15.

so, and that means that the members of the trade-union are obliged to subscribe to that political fund, unless they, what is called 'contract out,' that is to say, sign a declaration or give notice that they do not wish to subscribe to that fund. The Bill, before this Council, if I may say so, reverses the process. It allows a member of a trade-union to contract in, the opposite of a 'contracting out.' Any member of a trade-union may ask to be allowed to contribute to the political fund, if a political fund exists, but, of course, contribution to that fund is in no way a condition of admission to the Union."

The trade-unionists are naturally inclined to exercise their political rights with a view to advance their position. They should however remember that, in so doing, the chief motive of 'maintaining or improving the condition of their working lives' is not lost sight of. Mr. Appleton may here be aptly quoted. While reviewing the scope of trade-unions before the Royal Society of Arts in 1922, he said * :—

"I have been asked whether a trade-unionist ought not to use his political as well as his trade-union arm, my answer is an unequivocal 'Yes.' But he should, in developing the political arm, see that the trade-union arm is neither tied up, nor broken, nor withered. He should also be careful to see that it is not used to cut his own stomach."

It was in 1913 that the then Liberal ministry in England put the whole question of trade-union politics on a new basis. It laid down that a trade-union might spend money for political purposes provided :—

(*a*) that the money so spent was raised by a special levy on members,

(*b*) that it was authorised to do so by a ballot of its members, and

(*c*) that the members were given an opportunity to 'contract out' of the payment of the political levy.

Since that year † 292 unions have taken secret ballots on the establishment of political funds : in eighteen cases there has

* Quoted in Labour Gazette, Bombay, September, 1922, No. I, Vol. II, page 27.

† Ramsay Muir : Trade-Unionism and the Trade-Union Bill (London, 1927), page 106.

been a majority against the fund. Only nine unions have taken more than one ballot during the last 14 years; nearly all the unions having assumed that the matter was settled once for all when the first ballot was taken."

But it is surprising that the votes cast in these ballots were very small. "Out of a total membership of 3,003,373 in the registered unions, less than one-third voted: 683,272 for the levy, and 272,394 against. In some important unions, the poll was only 10 or 15 per cent of the membership. In 40 unregistered unions, 478,828 votes were given for the levy and 305,804 against.*

"Still more surprising is the small number of claims for exemption. At the end of 1925, only 104,797 contracted out in the registered unions, although 270,000 had voted against the levy while the ballots were taken." †

It is often said that the small polls at the ballots is a clear proof of the apathy of a large number of unionists towards the political fund. The figures no doubt reveal a great amount of indifference, but it would be more fair to admit, as Mr. Ramsay Muir writes, "that less than one-tenth of the members objected to paying the levy sufficiently to vote against it." ‡

The inclusion of the political clause in the Indian Trade-Union Act was a dire necessity, and the Government have done their duty by the workers by yielding to it. The labour movement is still in its infancy, and it is hoped that the trade-unionists of India will steer clear of all useless political controversies.

The working of the Trade-Union Act brought some obscurities to light, and a Bill was consequently introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 4th September, 1928, to remove them. These obscurities were of a twofold nature:—

(1) Section 11 of the Act of 1926 dealt with the procedure in appeal from the orders of the Registrar, either refusing to register a trade-union or issuing orders for the withdrawal or

* Ramsay Muir: Trade-Unionism and the Trade-Union Bill (London, 1927), page 106.

† Ibid., page 107.

‡ Ibid.

cancellation of the certificate of registration. This section was confusing, as it did not make it clear where the appellate court was located. It was thus moved that the appellate court should be the court where the head-office of the trade-union was located.

(2) Again, in the same section, it was not clear which was the appellate court in the presidency towns and in Rangoon. It was moved that the appellate court in such cases was to be the High Court.

The Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly on the 17th September, 1928, and was in the course of time assented to by the Council of State.

It has been observed that the number of strikes reported during 1926 was the lowest on record. The year 1927 was a peaceful one on the whole, although it closed with serious labour troubles in Bombay and on the East Indian Railway. There were 129 strikes; 1,31,655 persons were involved in them, and the total number of working days lost was almost double that of the preceding year. The workmen gained some concessions in about one-third of the strikes, more than 60 of which centred round the cotton mill industry, mostly in Bombay.

The situation in 1928 grew worse. A large number of strikes broke out, mostly in Bombay, and an Enquiry Committee was consequently appointed by the Bombay Government in a resolution, dated the 13th October, 1928, with Sir Charles Fawcett as Chairman. The terms of reference to the Committee* were:—

"(*a*) Whether the amended scheme of a standardized schedule of rates and of a standardized muster, prepared by the Mill-owners' Association, and also the scheme, prepared by the Strike Committee, is fair and reasonable;

"(*b*) Whether the seventeen demands, advanced by the Strike Committee, are fair and reasonable and to what extent, if any, they should be met;

"(*c*) Whether the Standing Orders for operatives, as amended and presented by the Mill-owners' Association on the 4th of October, 1928, are fair and reasonable."

* Report of the Bombay Strike Enquiry Committee, 1928–29, Vol. I (Bombay, 1929), page 1.

The Committee think that "the proposals of the Mill-owners' Association (*a*) for standardization of the wages, duties and numbers of operatives in a mill and (*b*) for Standing Orders for the operatives, regarding the conditions of their employment, are in the main fair and reasonable."* Regarding the seventeen demands, ten of them are considered to be fair and reasonable and all of them, with two exceptions, were eventually conceded by the Mill-owners' Association. Two have been held unfair and unreasonable, while the remaining three have been declared to be only partly fair and reasonable.

On the question of the wage-cut, proposed by the Mill-owners' Association, of 7½ per cent in weavers' wages, the Committee state that "the weight of argument is in favour of the proposed wage-cut being justifiable, but we think there is an overriding consideration against the Mill-owners' Association, pressing the proposal any further . . . ." †

Dealing with the Standardization scheme, the Committee believe that it is desirable and that the mill-owners were well advised in following the lines of the Lancashire lists in drawing it up. It will afford much improvement on the present conditions, under which the worker does not sometimes receive a proportionate remuneration, or even any increment, for extra skill or effort. But the Committee are of opinion that the scheme itself reserves several matters for future standardization, and its revision is recommended after a few months' trial. With this end in view and that of avoiding strikes and lock-outs, machinery has been devised by 'Mediation Rules,' agreed to by the employers and employees, for setting up Joint Committees, to inquire into disputes arising under the scheme and to try to arrange for a settlement. The Committee hold that more than 70 strikes took place in the textile industry in the Bombay city in the course of their proceedings. "It is obvious," they say, "that this state of things is prejudicial to the well-being of the industry, including that of the workers themselves, and that its continuance, when combined with the high level of wages in Bombay, may result in increasing the existing tendency of mill-owners to establish mills up-country, where labour is cheaper and works

* Report of the Bombay Strike Enquiry Committee, 1928–29 (Bombay, 1929), page 166.

† Ibid., page 126.

more steadily. The present greater uncertainty, as to when a lightning strike may take place in a mill, necessarily disables its management in many ways, e.g., in accepting large contracts, and the workers themselves will surely benefit by progress towards the stage now generally reached in Europe, where discussion and an attempt at settlement between the Workers' and the Employers' Organisations are almost necessary preludes to a strike or a lock-out." *

The recurrence of strikes, some of which were of a serious nature, led the Government of India to move in the affair. Thus, early in September, 1928, the Hon'ble Mr. C. A. McWatters, member for Industries and Labour, moved in the Legislative Assembly that the Bill, to make provision for the investigation and settlement of trade-disputes and for certain other purposes, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinions thereon.

The question of legislating on this subject was first taken up by the Government of India in 1919, when, on an opposition from the majority of the Local Governments, the matter had to be dropped. It was taken up a second time in 1924 at the instance of the Bombay Government, but it met with a somewhat mixed reception once again. The Trade-Disputes Bill, as introduced in September, 1928, recognised the fact that industrial strikes did not concern merely the employers and the employees, but were also concerned with the public and involved an obligation on the Government. The Bill was circulated for opinion and was ultimately passed into an Act, receiving the assent of the Governor-General on the 12th April, 1929. Its provisions are as follows :—

(1) The first provision is in reference to some sort of machinery, by which Government should be in a position to intervene as early as possible in the case of trade-disputes. The necessary machinery can take the form of Courts of Inquiry or Boards of Conciliation, the main object being to give publicity to the affair and bring the force of public opinion to bear upon the strikes, thereby shortening their duration.

Section 3 of the Trade-Disputes Act reads :—

"If any trade-dispute exists, or is apprehended, between an employer and any of his workmen, the Local Government, or

* Report of the Bombay Strike Enquiry Committee, 1928-29 (Bombay, 1929), page 151.

where the employer is the head of a department under the control of the Governor-General in Council, or is a Railway Company, the Governor-General in Council may by order in writing :—

"(*a*) refer any matters, appearing to be connected with or relevant to the dispute, to a Court of Inquiry to be appointed by the Local Government, or the Governor-General in Council, as the case may be ; or

"(*b*) refer the dispute to a Board of Conciliation to be appointed by the Local Government, or the Governor-General in Council, as the case may be, for promoting a settlement thereof :

"Provided that, where both parties to the dispute apply, whether separately or conjointly, for a reference to a court, or where both parties apply, whether separately or conjointly, for a reference to a Board and the authority having the power to appoint is satisfied that the persons applying represent the majority of each party, a Court or a Board, as the case may be, shall be appointed accordingly."

The Courts and Boards shall be empowered to enforce the attendance of any person and examine him on oath. They will be entitled to compel the production of documents and material objects and to issue commissions for the examination of witnesses.

(2) In public utility services, which are essential to the health, safety and welfare of the community, it is enjoined that 14 days' notice should be given before the strike actually breaks out or the lock-out is declared. This is meant to enable the Government to bring into play the conciliation machinery. The meaning of the term 'public utility service' is made clear so as to include the following :—

"(*i*) any railway service which the Governor-General in Council may, by notification in the 'Gazette of India,' declare to be a public utility service for the purposes of this Act*; or

"(*ii*) any postal, telegraph, or telephone service ; or

"(*iii*) any industry, business, or undertaking which supplies light or water to the public ; or

"(*iv*) any system of public conservancy or sanitation."

* The Trade-Disputes Act, 1929 (VII of 1929), Section 2, g.

(3) The Act renders illegal any strike or lock-out which

"(*a*) has any object other than the furtherance of a trade-dispute within the trade or industry, in which the strikers or employers locking-out are engaged; and

"(*b*) is designed or calculated to inflict severe, general and prolonged hardship upon the community and thereby to compel the Government to take or abstain from taking any particular course of action." *

The Act suffers from some serious drawbacks. The workers in public utility services are differently treated, and a notice of 14 days is demanded from them, before they actually stop working. It is easy enough to understand the underlying principle, but, if they are placed under a disadvantage, they must have some compensatory advantages. It is regretful to note that the Act fails to secure any special privileges for them as regards conditions of employment.

The penal provisions, relating to illegal strikes and lock-outs, are designed to prevent one section of workers coming to the assistance of another section of workers who may be in dispute. This puts an end to sympathetic strikes, and it will be no wonder if the clause proves mischievous in the long run. Trade-unionism in India is still in an infant stage and requires careful handling by all concerned. The existence of strong and responsible trade-unions is necessary for effectively carrying out the provisions of the Act, and the fact was clearly brought out by the Hon'ble Mr. A. C. McWatters in his speech in the Legislative Assembly on the 21st September, 1929.

* The Trade-Disputes Act, 1929 (VII of 1929), Section 16.

PART II

THE FACTORY LABOURER AND HIS ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER V

THE FACTORY LABOURER

THE genesis of factory labour in India can be traced back to the nineteenth century. The villages were then mainly isolated and self-sufficient. The agriculturists and artisans lived side by side. The latter held land rent free, or at a reduced rental, and received their share of the agricultural produce at the time of harvest.

The Indian village was compact and free from foreign competition, owing mostly to the lack of easy means of communication. The occupation of the artisan, as also of the agriculturist, was hereditary and went down from father to son. But a change came with the advent of British rule. Foreign competition set in, although it was seriously checked by the entire absence of ready communications in the interior of the country. "The mass of the population, generally speaking, were as yet unaffected. They felt the foreign rule, they felt the heavy assessments, they felt the decay of old institutions, but they did not feel the competition of foreign goods or other external forces effectively enough to induce them to change their industrial methods or established organisation."*

As Romesh Chundra Dutt says: "India in the eighteenth century was a great manufacturing as well as a great agricultural country, and the products of the Indian loom supplied the markets of Asia and of Europe. It is, unfortunately, true that the East India Company and the British Parliament, following the selfish commercial policy of a hundred years ago, discouraged Indian manufacturers in the early years of British rule in order to encourage the rising manufactures of England. Their fixed policy, pursued during the last decades of the 18th century and the first decades of the 19th, was to make India subservient to the industries of Great Britain and to make the Indian people grow raw produce only, in order to supply material for the looms and manufactories of Great Britain. This policy was pursued with unwavering resolution and with fatal success; orders were

* D. R. Gadgil: Industrial Evolution of India (Oxford U. Press, 1924).

sent out to force Indian artisans to work in the Company's factories; commercial residents were legally vested with extensive powers over villages and communities of Indian weavers; prohibitive tariffs excluded Indian silk and cotton goods from England, English goods were admitted into India free of duty or on payment of a nominal duty." *

But this was not all. With the disappearance of the Moghul court as a great patron of fine arts, the Indian industries received a serious blow, which was further aggravated by the invention of the power-loom in Europe and the development and extension of railways and roads in India. Millions of artisans thereby lost their chief source of livelihood and were forced to turn to land. Before 1860, the "casual labourer . . . . . was almost unknown in India," † although forced labour in Government works had long been in use. The opening up of railways by Lord Dalhousie and the creation of further public works led to the mobilisation of ordinary unskilled labourers. They were mostly recruited from the poor agriculturists, who got an opportunity to eke out a supplementary income in slack seasons. The village weavers, on whom foreign competition had begun to tell heavily, were also won over and swelled the ranks of day-to-day labourers. A series of disastrous famines occurred in the last century and these, coupled with the manifold changes brought about under the British rule, adversely affected the agriculturists. "The British had given rights of free transfer and absolute ownership . . . . to the cultivators . . . . Again, the judicial system which had been adopted gave the money-lender a great power over his debtor, and finally the Limitation Act, making the renewal of the debt-bond in short periods compulsory, made the position of the debtor much worse. Thus, though there was nothing in the nature of a peculiar hardship in the mere fact of an agriculturist being indebted, these other causes acting in concert had reduced the debtor, in many cases, to the position of a virtual serf . . . . . ." ‡ Several tenancy laws have been passed since then, and the position of the agriculturists has greatly improved. Still, the disintegration of the village self-sufficiency, the continual decay of old crafts, the

* R. C. Dutt: India under Early British Rule (London, 1906), p. *viii*.

† Gadgil: Industrial Evolution of India (Oxford U. Press, 1924), page 21.

‡ Ibid., pages 32 and 33.

wasteful habits of the cultivators, and their small uneconomic holdings brought a large number of workers into the urban areas. This synchronised with the introduction of large scale production in Indian industry—specially in jute and cotton. The first cotton spinning and weaving mill was started in Bombay about 1851, and the manufacture of jute with the aid of machinery was introduced three years later. These mills passed through several vicissitudes of fortune before they were on the high road to success. The movement towards industrialization of India had set in, and it received a great impetus after the World War of 1914. We are now in a stage of economic transformation, and the ever-increasing number of Indian industries is steadily absorbing the poor and the needy.

The hereditary occupation of our factory hands is mainly agriculture.* Homeless labourers bring their families with them. But, if a labourer has a home, his family ordinarily continues to reside in it. He regularly sends a portion of his income for its support † and resorts to his rural surroundings off and on. The monotonous factory-life tires out his energies, and he seeks an occasional relief from it by taking to agricultural work on the open fields.

*Compare Margaret Read: From Field to Factory (Student Christian Movement, London, 1927), page 36 :—

"Talk to a factory-labourer, who is lethargic and heavy, doing monotonous work among noisy machinery, of his village, and his face lights up, and though there is sadness and the look of an exile in his face, it is obvious where his heart and most of his thoughts are. It is easy to get an impression of caged wild animals, when looking round at the workers in a factory shed."

Annual Factory Report for Bombay for the year 1917, page 4: "With a long-established and steady industry like cotton spinning and weaving, it would have been natural to expect a large domiciled working population in the chief centres of the industry at least. There is as yet no factory population, which looks upon the city, in which it works, as its home.

". . . . . the Indian operative is, or considers himself to be, independent of factory employment as a means of livelihood. He can at any time abandon factory life and revert to agriculture. As a landowner, no matter to how small an extent, his interests are centred in the village from which he comes, and his presence in any of the industrial centres is looked upon as a temporary measure to assist his people at home by remittances of money, or at least to relieve them of the necessity of supporting him."

† The Postmaster-General, Bombay Circle, shows how, from 13 post offices situated in mill areas in the Bombay city, money orders to the value of Rs. 71 lakhs were issued in 1921. He further adds : "It can be safely assumed that the greater part of the business was from the workmen."

Civil Condition

Marriage is practically universal in India and is looked upon as a religious obligation. "For Hindus, marriage is a sacrament which must be performed regardless of the fitness of the parties to bear the responsibilities of a mated existence. A Hindu male must marry and beget children—sons, if you please—to perform his funeral rites, lest his spirit wander uneasily in the waste places of the earth. The very name of son, 'putra,' means one who saves his father's soul from the hell called 'puta.' A Hindu maiden, unmarried at puberty, is a source of social obloquy to her family and of damnation to her ancestors. Among the Mohammadans, who are not handicapped by such penalties, the married state is equally common, partly owing to Hindu example and partly to the general conditions of life in primitive society, where a wife is almost a necessity both as a domestic drudge and as a help-mate in field-work." *

The following table shows, for both males and females, the proportion per mille in each main age-group of the married, unmarried and widowed in the whole population of India † :—

AGE	UNMARRIED		MARRIED		WIDOWED	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
0—5 ...	994	988	6	11	...	1
5—10 ...	966	907	32	88	2	5
10—15 ...	879	601	116	382	5	17
15—20 ...	687	188	298	771	15	41
20—25 ...	402	51	564	877	34	72
25—30 ...	194	25	752	863	54	112
30—35 ...	98	19	826	797	76	184
35—40 ...	62	15	847	727	91	258
40—45 ...	52	14	825	599	123	387
45—50 ...	41	13	812	527	147	460
50—55 ...	39	11	767	370	194	619
55—60 ...	37	12	742	352	221	636
60—65 ...	35	11	684	193	381	796
65—70 ...	38	15	648	207	314	778
70 and over...	39	14	567	127	394	859

* 'The Population Problem in India' by P. K. Wattal (Bombay, 1916), page 3.

† Census of India, 1921, Vol. I, page 153 (Calcutta, 1924).

These statistics, when compared with an advanced European country, appear striking in three respects—the universality of marriage, the early age at which it is celebrated and the large proportion of widows. The following figures relate to the number per mille of unmarried persons in the various countries * :—

COUNTRY	NUMBER PER MILLE OF UNMARRIED	
	Males	Females
India	498	358
England	592	571
France	515	454
Italy	598	545
Rumania	580	520
Russia	571	530
Japan	657	650
United States	580	527

By the age of 15, the number of unmarried girls in India is as low as 601 per mille, while after 20, or at the most 25, practically every female is married. "The number of males and females who are married by the age of twenty is 9 and 25 per cent respectively of the population of each sex up to that age. In Italy, the corresponding proportions are rather less than one in 1,000 for males and rather more than one in 100 for females. The proportions are considerably less in Western Europe but greater in the Balkans and Russia. In the latter country, one male in 120 below 20 years and one female in thirty-eight were married according to the figures of the census of 1897. The marriage of girls at an age when they are still children is a custom common among the Hindus and in other communities, and their marriage at, or soon after puberty, is practically universal."† The number of widows is strikingly large in India. The following figures ‡ relate to the proportion of widows in the population per 1,000 :—

* Census of India, 1921, Vol. I, page 154 (Calcutta, 1924).

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid., page 155.

AGE	India 1921	England and Wales
All ages	175.0	73.2
0—5	.7	...
5—10	4.5	...
10—15	16.8	...
15—20	41.4	...
20—25	71.5	1.5
25—35	146.9	13.1
35—45	325.2	50.5
45—65	619.4	193.3
65 and over	834.0	565.9

The early age of marriage, the disparity of the ages of husbands and wives and the prejudice against the remarriage of widows account for their large number in India. The tables given above relate to the population in general and are fairly true of the factory labourers.

Marriage implies expense which is often met by a loan from the 'bania.' Amongst workers recruited from low classes like the chamar,* chuhra † and others, women are actually sold. The prospective bridegroom or his parents are called upon to pay a price which is determined by the beauty of the bride and the social status of her family. ‡

The system of child marriage varies in different provinces. The Census report of India for the year 1911 shows that it was most prevalent in Bihar and Orissa, Bombay and Central India. It was rare in Assam, Burma and the North Western Frontier province. But a rise in the age of marriage is no doubt discernible of late in some provinces—e.g., Bengal, Punjab, Bihar and Orissa. This tendency varies considerably among different classes: it is conspicuous in higher castes, less so in others and is the result mainly of the spread of education and of economic pressure.

We must remember that the above figures do not necessarily represent the actual state of affairs. They suffer from one grave

* A caste of men who work in leather.

† Sweeper.

‡ Rs. 50 is the rough average price for a wife calculated by the Author from amongst 175 different cases in the Punjab.

error. The word 'marriage' has been greatly misrepresented. It should be borne in mind that the consummation of the marriage is deferred till the time of the *muklawa* ceremony. In the interval, the bride remains with her parents, and the *muklawa* is celebrated, when she attains the age of puberty. Thereafter, she comes to stay with her husband. But *muklawa* may be celebrated, before the girl comes of age. The bride may find herself in the bridegroom's family even before the age of ten.

A special census was carried out in the Punjab in 1920–1921 "to obtain data for discussion of the problems of the effect of duration of marriage on fertility, of the size of the family, of the age of the woman at marriage, of the effect of primogeniture on longevity and the like."* The Government was aware of the misinterpretat s that the term "marriage" had given rise to. Due notice was taken of the consummation of the marriage, and figures, collected under this safeguard for 166,419 families for showing the percentages of the ages at which women had been married and had gone to live with their husbands, are given below †:—

ALL CASTES	Below 10	10–14	15–19	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40 and over	Total
All Classes ...	15.2	36.3	31.7	10.9	3.5	1.4	0.6	0.4	100
Caste-Group I (Clerics mainly) ...	22.5	41.5	25.7	6.2	1.9	0.8	0.8	0.6	100
Caste-Group II (Agriculturists mainly) ...	13.4	35.1	33.7	12.0	3.5	1.5	0.5	0.3	100
Caste-Group III (Traders mainly) ..	14.7	42.4	31.0	8.7	2.2	0.6	0.3	0.1	100
Caste-Group IV (Artisans mainly) ...	13.4	37.1	32.7	11.2	3.4	1.3	0.6	0.3	100
Caste-Group V (Menials mainly) ...	17.7	35.5	30.1	11.1	3.3	1.3	0.5	0.4	99.9
Caste-Group VI (Criminals mainly) ...	13.4	33.9	31.7	11.5	5.9	2.0	0.9	0.6	99.9

* Punjab Census Report, 1921, Vol. I, page 247.

† Punjab Census Report, 1921, Vol. I, page 251. "It must be remembered that when we find that 15% of women were below the age of ten at marriage, this denotes that these girls had been married civilly at a very young age indeed and had actually come to reside in their husbands' homes (though not necessarily to cohabit with them) before the age of 10."

The number of families for which facts and figures were collected may be grouped as under * :—

No.	Caste-Group.	Total number of families in the Group.
1.	Clerics	16,611
2.	Agriculturists	74,813
3.	Traders	11,879
4.	Artisans	7,649
5.	Menials	31,832
6.	Criminals	23,635
		166,419

The factory labourers in the Punjab are recruited largely from the 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th caste-groups, and the results obtained above may also apply in their cases. This condition of affairs is rather deplorable, and only a general enlightenment of people can bring about reformation in the direction of late marriages. It is satisfactory to note that there is "a tendency during the last 40 years to postpone the age of marriage." †

Early marriage is the subject of legislation in Baroda and Mysore. The Baroda Infant Marriages Prevention Law of 1904 enjoins 12 years as the age of marriage for girls and 16 years for boys. There are some exceptions to this law, but it is on the whole very beneficial. In Mysore, the Infant Marriages Prevention Regulation of 1894 prohibits the marriage of a girl under 8 years and of a man of fifty and above with a girl less than 14 years of age. The Act has been administered with much leniency, and it is doubtful if it has had any practical effect. These legislative enactments have encouraged the reformers in British India, and the Sarda Act has recently been passed to secure the prevention of early marriages.

The average labourer looks upon his wife as a child-producing machine. He acts on the dictum, 'Be fruitful and multiply.' The Hindu believes that his soul cannot rest in peace, unless and until he has got a son to perform the necessary religious ceremonies after his death. So he goes on and, if he happens to have daughters at the start, he is prepared to marry a second

* Punjab Census Report, 1921, Vol. I, page 248.

† Ibid., page 245.

wife to bring forth at least one son. The Muslim labourer, on the other hand, is generally ignorant of his true religious dogmas. In these circumstances, it is difficult for the labourer to exercise marital restraint or to put an artificial limit on the increase of his offspring. He understands religion in his own way and considers it a great sin to control birth.

Literacy

The factory labourers are mostly illiterate. The following statement* sums up literacy by age, sex and locality for the people in general.

PROVINCE	NUMBER PER MILLE WHO ARE LITERATE										
	All ages 5 & over			5–10		10–15		15–20		20 & over	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
India	82	139	21	29	10	110	28	174	36	171	20
Assam	72	124	14	35	8	110	21	164	23	150	13
Baluchistan	47	76	7	104	76	289	187	301	217	346	166
Bengal	104	181	21	45	11	144	29	214	28	225	21
Bihar & Orissa	51	96	6	18	3	70	8	111	10	126	7
Bombay	95	157	27	42	15	146	42	217	53	184	24
Burma	317	510	112	96	45	373	115	569	156	620	128
Central Provinces & Berar.	49	87	9	17	5	80	12	142	18	104	19
Madras	98	173	24	35	12	129	33	204	44	214	22
N.W.F. Province ...	50	80	10	11	3	47	11	114	20	102	11
Punjab with Delhi ...	46	76	9	6	3	54	12	98	17	97	10
United Provinces ...	42	73	7	14	3	62	9	92	12	89	7

This shows that, of all persons of ages 5 and over, only 8.2 per cent are literate. Literacy is defined as meaning that a person 'can write a letter to a friend and read the answer to it.'† Of males 13.9 per cent are literate at the age of five and above. But the extent of literacy in a population is measured by its literate adults, i.e., persons of age 20 and over. The above table shows that, in this class, 17.1 per cent are literate amongst males and 2 per cent amongst females. These figures are alarming and point towards the importance of mass education. The case of factory labourers is extremely deplorable. There

* Census of India, 1921, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1924), page 177.

† Punjab Census Report, 1921, Vol. I, page 288.

are very few facilities provided exclusively for them, and even those that exist do not draw their complete attention. For example, the labourers have two flourishing high schools at Dhariwal in the Punjab, but the number of their children receiving education in them totalled only 20 in May, 1927. It may be mentioned that the number of factory labourers, working in the local mills during the same period, stood at about 1,000. Almost similar is the case in other industrial areas in India, where some of the factory-owners have started primary schools for the children of their employees. The Bombay Industrial Disputes Committee Report of 1922 shows that only 5 per cent of the operative class in Bombay are able to read and write in their own vernaculars. Literacy is often met within the rank of skilled workmen. But the number of such operatives, as can read and write the English language, is like a drop in the ocean.

Economic Condition

An inquiry into the economic condition of our labourers may be conducted either by an extensive or an intensive method. The extensive method consists in collecting information regarding income, expenses, etc. from a large number of workers. The intensive method rests mainly on a careful study of a number of representative working class families—families which may represent the largest number of workers in that selected field.

It is difficult to select representative families in India. The labourers mainly belong to two religions—Hinduism and Islam. The Muslims are extravagant in habits, at least comparatively. The Hindus lean to the other extreme. Again, among the workers, there are castes and sub-castes which differ from one another. Thus, intensive enquiry is fruitless. It is difficult to find out representative families. It is still more difficult to study their condition closely, especially when they are bound to misconstrue the motives of the investigator at the very start.

The same difficulty exists in an extensive inquiry. It was early in 1920 that I was appointed an Industrial Investigator under the Punjab Government Board of Economic Inquiry, and was called upon to inquire into the economic condition of factory operatives in the province. My inquiries were confined to workmen earning Rs. 50 per month or less and related chiefly to factories situated at Lahore, Lyallpur, Badami Bagh and Shahdara.

I collected a large number of family budgets in the light of the draft questionnaire given in Appendix B and submitted them with my report in September, 1920.

Ever since 1920, I have been busy investigating the conditions of factory labour. I made a tour of the whole of India in 1927 and, with the help of the questionnaire given in Appendix A, collected much evidence bearing on my subject. Regarding family budgets, it must be pointed out that trustworthy information is difficult to secure in the present stage of our advancement. The diversity of creeds, the great variation in the number and ages of dependants and last, but not the least, the great communal tension that prevails in the country create difficulties which an investigator cannot easily overcome. Again, the factory labourers are illiterate. Those who can read and write their own vernaculars are a minute minority. I have met thousands of labourers and have not so far come across a single family which was in the habit of recording its expenses. Accurate information is only possible, if the labourers keep an account of their income and expenditure and, on this point, even the educated community is not mindful.

Under these conditions, misstatements and discrepancies are bound to occur. The purchase on credit of the necessaries of life by the working class introduces complexities of its own. The task of the investigator is hard—very hard, indeed. He collects information, the very accuracy of which rests on the assumption that the labourers remember their accounts and do not in any way overstate them. The assumption itself is wrong, and the results which our family budgets can give mainly point towards certain tendencies rather than actual truths. Nevertheless, with all these reservations, some results of enquiries may prove helpful in determining the conditions of factory labour.

First, as regards incomings. My enquiries* show that wages are generally paid monthly with one to two weeks always in arrears. Weekly wages are in force in most of the jute mills in Bengal, while fortnightly payments are made in some mills at Ahmedabad. The periods of wage payment in the different factories have been shown in a tabulated form in Appendix D.

*J. H. Kelman, Labour in India (London, 1923), page 118 :—

The fact that there is seldom an adequate supply of labour for modern industry and the further fact that there are many reasons which tempt those

These figures were collected by the Government of India and relate to the end of the year 1924. They clearly show a lack of uniformity in the payment of wages. The period of payment differs from district to district and industry to industry: even in the same industry there may be different periods of wage payment. The waiting period greatly affects the labourers. There are wide variations in it in the smaller and less organised industries. But in larger establishments, regularity of payment is the general rule. Still, small variations may occur on account of holidays. The length of the waiting period is usually in proportion to the length of the period of payment. Monthly wages are paid less promptly than fortnightly wages, and the waiting period in the case of weekly wages is less as compared with fortnightly wages. Daily wages are generally paid on the same day or the day following.

Some points should be borne in mind in this connection. Theoretically, a small factory can pay wages more promptly than a large firm. Each worker is known to the master and the system of payment is consequently simple enough. Again, piece-rate wages necessitate mathematical calculations and can be paid less promptly than time wages. If the calculations are intricate, the waiting period will necessarily be long. It will thus be noticed that different classes of workers in the same factory are paid on different days.

For skilled workmen, whose services are indispensable and whose wages cannot be otherwise calculated, wages are paid and reckoned by the month. They are usually on the permanent staff and are paid for Sundays and other holidays. For partly skilled and ordinary unskilled labourers, wages are reckoned by the day—e.g., eight annas a day—and paid either monthly,

employed in it to leave it, especially at first before they have got accustomed to its conditions, have made this habit of deferred payment almost universal in mills in larger industrial centres. In Bombay where it is most stringent, it usually entails the postponement of payments till the middle of the month subsequent to the one for which payment is made, and the retaining of a fortnight's wages in hand. Thus, a new worker may be employed for six weeks before he receives any payment whatever, and he then receives wages for four weeks only. Until recently, it was common for employees to work for two months before any payment was made. The statement about the scarcity of labour is dealt with elsewhere in this chapter, but the rest of the account is absolutely in accord with facts.

fortnightly or weekly. Nothing is paid to them for Sundays and other holidays. Labour recruited from reformatory settlements is generally unskilled and is on the daily list. It is in some industries paid after every four days.

In organised industries, two methods of payment exist—time and piece. Piece-wages are introduced wherever it is possible to judge the output of a man accurately. This is the direct influence of the introduction of machinery. For example, weavers almost everywhere get monthly wages calculated on the piece-rate system. In several cases, workers who are paid by the piece in Lancashire are put on the time-rate in India. And, if time-rates and piece-rates yield the same results, the former are generally preferred. The two are experimented upon in individual cases, and the profitable one is substituted for the other. The Bombay Government enquiry into the relative strength of time- and piece-workers in the cotton mill industry may be set forth in the following table * :—

CENTRE	Men		Women		Big lads		All workers including half-timers	
	Time	Piece	Time	Piece	Time	Piece	Time	Piece
Bombay city & island.	51.5	48.5	36.6	63.4	96.3	3.7	54.0	46.0
Ahmedabad ...	53.3	46.7	54.4	45.6	100.0	...	61.5	38.5
Sholapur	60.1	39.9	19.4	80.6	97.0	3.0	57.8	42.2
Other centres ...	57.9	42.1	34.4	65.6	100.0	...	60.7	39.3
Bombay Presidency ...	52.8	47.2	36.1	63.9	96.8	3.2	56.0	44.0

No such inquiries have been instituted in other areas, but it is probable that the same general tendencies exist elsewhere as well. " From figures supplied by 48 jute mills in Bengal, it has been ascertained that, of a total of 208,972 persons employed in 1922, 65,677 were piece-workers and 143,295 time-workers. In Bengal, big lads and half-timers are mainly time-workers, while the greater proportion of women are employed as selectors, softener workers, card drawers and roving workers, and as such are as a rule, but not always, paid time-wages. Women are also employed in winding and hand sewing, both of which are paid by the piece. But in jute mills, as in cotton mills, the same type

* Report of an Enquiry into the Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry (Bombay, 1923), page 9.

of worker is paid time-wages in one mill and piece-wages in another." *

In some cases, e.g., in unregistered carpet factories, the work is done on contract. The proprietor advances sums averaging Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 to the master-weavers under an agreement drawn up beforehand. The master-weavers employ their own staff—usually young children—and pay them in any way they please. The looms, the sheds, the material and all are provided by the proprietor. In this way, the process of exploitation filters down from master to weaver and from weaver to worker or apprentice. This exploitation is detrimental to the interests of the master-weaver—still more so to the small children who work from sunrise to sunset for a miserable pittance. But it is highly lucrative for the proprietor, who gains huge profits at the expense of his workmen. In some carpet factories, the proprietor deals direct with the contractor who is provided with the necessary raw material. The conditions of work are drawn up beforehand, and the contractor prepares loomsheds and all other things for master-weavers who enter into a separate contract with him. Young children are brought in by master-weavers, and exploitation here involves a slightly larger process.

The labourer's services are secured either through co-workers, mistris, contractors, or directly. In Upper India, they are usally secured direct through information supplied by co-workers. In Bombay and Ahmedabad, the foreman is entrusted with this task. He knows that any negligence in this direction would lead to his dismissal and "endeavours to acquire an influence over his friends and acquaintances who live in the same or in neighbouring chawls. He lends them money, advises them in family affairs and arbitrates in disputes. When labour is required, he uses the influence so gained and is generally successful in procuring hands. On occasions when he visits his village, he paints the life of a mill-worker in the brightest colours and endeavours to induce his relations and friends to leave their homes and fields for the more remunerative calling." † In the Bengal presidency, the overseer is the

* R. N. Gilchrist: Wages and Profit-sharing—(University of Calcutta, 1924), page 296.

† Burnett Hurst: page 47.

'sirdar'* who provides jobs to other workers at a price and supervises their activities in factory hours. More often than not, he lends out money at usurious rates of interest and, in several cases, possesses semi-detached buildings to be let on rent to the labourers.

Women overseers (naikin or mukadamin) vary from factory to factory, and they are sometimes as oppressive as the male jobbers. The position of a naikin is not looked upon as respectable in Bombay: she is generally known to possess a bad character.

There is a great dearth of literature on the wages of factory labourers in India. It was in 1919 that the lack of wage-statistics was seriously felt. Many requests were made to the Central Government for the publication of trustworthy statistics of wages and an index number of the cost of living of industrial workers. The Government of India, in 1921, addressed the Local Governments in this matter and came to the conclusion that an all-India index number would be of no use. The vastness of the country, the differences in the habits of workers and the variation of their expenditure on housing, food and clothing were difficulties which could not easily be overcome. The idea was consequently dropped, and the construction of index numbers was left to Local Governments. In Bombay, the Labour Office at once published an index-number, and the attempt has been continued ever since. Index-numbers have been regularly published for six industrial centres in Bihar and Orissa. More recently, an inquiry has been instituted in Rangoon, and, as a result, index-numbers have been published for different industrial classes.†

The census of wages was also taken up in 1921 and abandoned as a fruitless attempt shortly after. The employers

* J. H. Kelman: Labour in India, page 102:—

". . . . . The Calcutta Sirdar has probably more influence than is usually wielded elsewhere, because in so many cases the managers and assistant managers under whom he works are Europeans. Even if they have acquired a certain knowledge of Bengali and Hindustani, there are still four or five other languages which it would be necessary for them to know in order to be able to talk freely with all their workers. The necessary frequency of furlough and the early age at which many European managers retire add to the strength of the body of sirdars as a wall of separation between the management and the workers."

† Clow: The State and Industry (Calcutta, 1928), pages 144–146.

were ready to co-operate, but the lack of organised labour offices stood in the way. Moreover, there were and are no standardised names for trades and occupations in the same industry. One nomenclature does not represent the same thing from province to province, and the differences in total earnings and paper-wages are sometimes very great. It is only through Local Governments that some reliable data can be had in reference to wages, but, here again, compulsion is needed. Compulsory collection of statistics on the lines of the Dominions does not exist in India, and very little reliable information is available on the subject. In May, 1921, the Labour office in Bombay conducted an inquiry into the wages and hours of labour in the cotton mill industry for the Bombay presidency. It covered 194,036 work-people, and some of the striking features may be summarised as follows * :—

"(1) *Men.*—In Bombay, Ahmedabad and 'other centres,' the majority of men-workers earned between 12 annas and Re. 1-8-0 per diem. In Sholapur, however, nearly half the number of men earned under 12 annas. The number of work-people in the industry throughout the presidency who earned between Re. 1-8-0 and Rs. 2-4-0 was slightly over one-fourth of the total.

"(2) *Women.*—Nearly half the number of women in Bombay city and island and Ahmedabad earned between 12 annas and one rupee a day. In Sholapur, over nine-tenths earned under 8 annas a day.

"(3) *Big lads and children.*—In Bombay city and island, about 45 per cent of big lads † and children earned between 12 annas and one rupee, in Ahmedabad and 'other centres' more than 60 per cent earned between four and eight annas, and in Sholapur nearly 58 per cent earned less than 4 annas."

The average monthly income of men, women, big lads and children and of all work-people working full time in the Bombay Presidency Cotton Mill Industry in May, 1914, and in May, 1921, are given in the following table. ‡ They take note of the

* G. Findlay Shirras: Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry, Bombay Presidency, page 7.

† Ibid. :—

Big lads mean all males between the ages of 14 and 18 years.

‡ Ibid., page 8.

monthly bonus, but exclude over-time pay, annual bonus, cheap houses and allowances for food and clothing.

CENTRE	WORK-PEOPLE	Monthly earnings per head May, 1914			Monthly earnings per head May, 1921			Increase per cent in 1921 over 1914	Weekly earnings in May, 1921	
		RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.		s.	d.†
Bombay (city and island).	Men	18	6	8	34	15	2	90	10	9
	Women	10	0	10	17	6	6	73	5	4 5
	Big lads and Children* ..	9	6	7	18	0	10	92	5	6.5
	All work-people * ...	16	6	3	30	10	0	87	9	5
Ahmedabad.	Men	15	7	1	34	2	11	121	10	6
	Women	9	15	11	19	9	4	96	6	0.5
	Big lads and Children *..	7	2	3	18	6	6	158	5	8
	All work-people * ...	13	9	9	30	2	11	122	9	3.5
Sholapur ...	Men	14	3	11	25	13	9	82	7	11.5
	Women	5	13	11	10	15	9	87	3	4.5
	Big lads and Children *..	6	9	6	14	12	0	124	4	6.5
	All work-people * ...	10	9	4	20	9	4	94	6	4
Other centres.	Men	13	8	7	28	12	4	112	8	10
	Women	6	13	4	16	6	11	140	5	0.6
	Big lads and Children *..	7	3	8	14	7	4	100	4	5.6
	All work-people * ...	11	14	1	25	1	10	111	7	9
Presidency.	Men	17	0	8	33	6	10	96	10	3.5
	Women	9	0	1	16	9	1	84	5	1
	Big lads and Children *..	7	13	4	17	3	7	119	5	3.5
	All work-people * ...	14	11	11	28	14	4	96	8	10.5

* Counting two half-timers as one full timer. † At Rs. 15 to the £1.

But nominal wages by themselves are not enough. The cost of living has increased greatly since the War, and it was therefore essential to ascertain the real value of wages in terms of commodities. The Bombay Labour Office in its enquiry of May, 1921 came to the conclusion that "the real or effective wages were . . . 14 per cent higher, that is, after allowing for the increase in the cost of living."* This, however, may not have been the case. The report is silent on the condition of labour-market in the Bombay presidency in May, 1921. We know that, under ordinary circumstances, there is an exodus of labourers to the rural areas in that month and that, by the law of supply and demand, the rates must naturally be higher in May owing to the decrease of supply in the ranks of labourers. It is not far from probable that the wage-earners in these circumstances may have been as bad economically as in 1914.

Thus far about the Bombay presidency. The table that follows gives the variations in the wages of industrial workers in the Punjab from 1916 to 1926. It does not show any real improvement except for five types of skilled labourers—oilman, mochi, reeler, press compositor and press distributor. An increase in nominal wages is of no use, if it is followed by a great rise in the prices of food-stuffs. The prices of food-stuffs were very high during the war years (1914–1919), and the workers were losers even with the augmentation of their money-wages. They were hard hit in some cases. Prices were at the highest point in 1920. The movement from 1920 to 1925 was, however, a double improvement as money-wages rose though prices fell.

*G. Findlay Shirras: Wages in the Bombay Presidency Cotton Mill Industry, page 20.

—	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916
**Skilled Labour Per Month*	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Engineer, 1st class ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	150	120–250	100–400	90–150	80–150
Engineer, 2nd class ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	120	90–130	70–140	70–125	60–125
Engine driver	44	43	40	38	35	30	30	25–45	20–45	20–30	15–40
Boiler-man	33	30	28	25	25	25	25	20–32	20–30	20–30	15–26
Black-smith	44	44	40	36	35	35	35	25–40	25–40	25–40	15–35
Fitter	64	60	55	50	50	50	50	40–60	40–60	40–60	30–60
Carpenter	46	45	42	40	35	35	35	25–45	25–45	25–40	20–40
Oilman	27	27	24	25	20	20	20	11–15	11–15	11–15	11–16
Mochi (leather-worker) ...	45	40	35	32	30	30	30	20–30	20–30	30	...
Spinner	25	25	28	25	20	20	20	18–25	18–25	18–20	18–20
Weaver	41	40	40	35	40	40	40	40	40	30	...
Dyer	22	22	20	22	30	30	30	30	30	30	...
Reeler	22	20	22	20	15	15	15	12–35	12–15	10–18	...
Press Compositor	43	40	36	36	25	25	25	15–30	15–30	15–30	20–31
Press Distributor	22	20	18	18	15	15	15	10–15	10–15	10–15	8–14
**Unskilled Labour Per Day*	As.	As.	As.	As.	As.	As.	As.	As.	As.	As.	As.
Coolie	16	16	16	16	16	15	14	12–16	12–15	10–12	8–12
Coolie (man) on gins ...	8	8	8	8	8	9	8	7–8	7–8	7–8	5–8
Coolie (woman) on gins ...	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	5–7	5–7	5–7	4–6

* Annual Reports on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the Punjab from 1916 to 1926.

The factory-owners reaped huge profits during the Great War. But the lack of combination prevented the operatives from getting their due. A large number of persons was wanted for the successful prosecution of the War. This led to scarcity of labour for factories. The decrease in its supply and an increase in demand for it owing to munition work and the manufacture of other articles resulted in a rise of money-wages. But this rise was more than counterbalanced by an increase in prices. A large number of labourers were just living on the 'poverty-line.'

Even before the commencement of the War, the wage-earners as a class did not enjoy a good position. A rough approximation of the economic condition of skilled labour in the Punjab may be had from the following table*:—

YEAR	Price of wheat † per maund in rupees	Average monthly wages in rupees	Wages of artisans in maunds of wheat
1901	2 8 0	18 0 0	7.20
1902	2 4 0	19 8 0	8.86
1903	2 4 0	18 4 0	8.11
1904	2 0 0	18 2 0	9.06
1905	2 8 0	21 4 0	8 50
1906	2 8 0	22 8 0	9.00
1907	2 12 0	24 0 0	8.73
1908	4 0 0	30 14 0	7.72
1909	3 12 0	27 0 0	7.20

These figures relate to the skilled labourers and are only confined to years 1901–1909. All the same, they show very clearly that real wages remained almost the same though money-wages greatly varied. The unskilled labourer has been in a pitiable plight all through. The table given below will elucidate the point still further ‡:—

* Punjab Census Report for 1921, Vol. I, page 48.

† A maund of wheat is equal to 82.286 lbs.

‡ Punjab Census Report, 1921, Vol. I, page 70. The figures relate only to the Punjab province.

CLASS OF LABOUR	Daily wages in annas			Increase per cent		Wages expressed in maunds of wheat per month		
	1909	1912	1917	1909 to 1912	1912 to 1917	1909	1912	1917
Iron and Hardware ...	12	16	17.5	33	9	6.0	9.4	7.7
Brass and Copper ...	16.75	16	18	—4½	12½	8.3	9.4	7.9
Carpenters ...	15.5	18	19.75	16	10	7.7	10.6	8.7
Cotton Weavers ...	4.25	6.25	9	47	44	2.1	3.7	4.0
Masons & Builders ...	15.25	17.25	19.5	13	13	7.6	10.2	8.6
General Unskilled ...	6.25	7	8.75	12	25	3.1	4.1	3.9

Variations in wages generally show a lag compared with prices. The price of wheat was lower in 1912 than in 1909 and 1917. The purchasing power of wages was then comparatively high. Throughout the period, however, the nominal wages have been rising steadily except in the case of brass and copper workers.

But the value of the table on page 147 is problematical on account of great variations in classification. For example, an assistant and a chargeman mistri are generally classed as fitters, but the former may earn only Rs. 15 per month, while the latter may get Rs. 75. The difference in nomenclature is sometimes very great. The word 'mistri' does not signify the same type of worker from factory to factory. In some cases, workers engaged on entirely different processes receive one and the same name, and *vice versa.*

Throughout my investigations into the conditions of labour, this point has been uppermost in my mind. There appears no way out of it, except that of giving a detailed list of wages in different factories. My activities in this direction were confined to the Punjab province. Some of the advanced factory-owners resented this inquiry on my part and, in certain cases, I had to look up the files of the local Inspector of Factories for verification.

A wage-census is extremely important at the present stage of our advancement. The Workmen's Compensation Act has

come into being since 1924, and the Commissioners, the insurance companies and the labourers are all interested in it. In fact, Workmen's Compensation would be a farce without a true wage-census published from time to time. The wage-census may well proceed on the following lines :—

(1) The workers should be divided into distinct occupations and their actual wages clearly given.

(2) The skilled and the unskilled workers should be classed separately, and their wages should be stated according to the period of training and experience.

(3) In addition to nominal wages, payments made in kind should be shown separately in terms of their money-value.

(4) As far as possible, the average number of days worked by each category of labourers should also be given.

This is how wage-census should proceed in each province. The data necessary for the purpose should be collected from factory-owners and checked by paid government staff. Trade-unions, wherever existing, can render invaluable help in this direction.

The wage-sheets collected by me appear under Appendix A and relate to the Punjab province only. They do not and cannot claim perfect accuracy. Far from it. They indicate roughly the variations of wages from place to place. For example, at Sujanpore, an ordinary labourer earns 6 annas a day, whereas his fellows get about 12 annas daily at Amritsar and 10 annas per day at Wah. The same unskilled workman earns at least Re. 1 a day in the building industry at Amritsar, Batala, Lahore and Rawalpindi. Again, the carpenter, working in the Sujanpore mills, gets about one rupee a day. The same carpenter receives Re. 1-12-0, Rs. 2 or even Rs. 2-4-0 at Amritsar, Lahore and Rawalpindi. He earns much more as a day-to-day worker in the building industry. A fitter gets Rs. 40 to 50 per month at Pathankot, Rs. 30 at Sujanpore, whereas he would receive more than Rs. 60 at Lahore, Rawalpindi, or Amritsar. An indigenous tanner gets 5 to 6 annas a day at Wazirabad. He earns much more—twice as much, I should say—in Shahdara. But he stays at Wazirabad and seems content with his lot. It should be remembered in this connection that the retail prices of articles consumed by the labourers do not show much variation

from place to place, owing mostly to the activities of the shrewd middlemen.

This difference* of wages prevails also in other areas and may be accounted for in several ways. The workman wants to be near his kith and kin. He prefers lower wages at home to higher wages elsewhere. This is one of the several factors which prevent, other things remaining the same, an equalisation of wages for the same work in different factories. The Indian labourer, like all human beings, has got his limitations. He wants to improve his position, but no reliable information is available about external conditions. Sooner or later, an epidemic occurs and a labourer is bereft of all his near and dear ones. He has none to look after. He takes a risk—a heavy risk—and goes out for work. After a year or so, he comes back as an agent or contractor with happy news for his co-villagers. Some persons display their willing readiness to accompany the adventurous labourer. This is generally how Indians have emigrated to far-off colonies, and this is how they sometimes move from place to place in search of high wages.

A greater or less equalisation of wages would have been attained by this time, if factory conditions had been what they ought to be in the different provinces. There is very little attraction for labourers in distant factories, and differences of wages for similar work must therefore remain very marked.

When all is said and done, it remains true that the labour-market is the poorest of all markets. It deals in labour—the labour of human beings. "A man cannot be standardised, nor can population be increased or decreased to conform to the economic force of supply and demand. He is not readily

* The employers have generally got strong organisations, but they have not yet evolved any standard scales of wages. The result is that wages differ from factory to factory, and the workers are generally ignorant of how they stand in relation to others. This causes friction which is usually accompanied by a strike. As the Bombay Industrial Disputes Committee (1922) reported, "the uncorrelated raising of wages in one factory is almost invariably seized upon as a grievance in other factories of the same class, and instances of strikes caused in this way are within the memory of all." They further added :—"It appears to us that the continual insistence of our witnesses on the differences of machinery and conditions of labour in the various factories, however justified, is liable to obscure the importance of a common practice in the scale of wages which, if it is not reached by agreement amongst the employers, will eventually be arrived at by pressure from amongst the men at a greater sacrifice of industrial peace . . ."

transported."* It is indeed true that the labourer is a human being and, like all human beings, he is swayed by feelings for home and locality. "It costs to pull up stakes, especially in the case of a family."* He cannot easily move in response to economic changes. These and other causes account for the variation of wages from town to town in all the countries of the world. But the conditions here are greatly accentuated partly by illiteracy, ignorance and want of organisation, and partly by bad factory conditions and environments.

There are sometimes wide differences in the wages of similar workers in the same factory. This may be due to experience or to skill and dexterity in the work. For example, there are fitters and fitters. In a factory at Lahore, fitters draw wages ranging from Rs. 33 to Rs. 110 per mensem, whereas blacksmiths get Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2-8-0 per day. The difference in wages can also be accounted for by the amount of influence and recommendation, which a labourer can bring to bear on the factory manager or proprietor in the absence of trade-union organisations. Sometimes, the relatives of employers are promoted without the requisite qualifications. This creates heart-burning amongst workers. But this is of no avail, as they have generally no common means of ventilating their grievances.

There is one thing which must be especially mentioned. One of the foremost difficulties in the way of the skilled workers is their ignorance of the English language. A factory manager at Amritsar told me that a second class engineer was drawing Rs. 250 per mensem under him in 1926. A new and more forceful plant was introduced soon after, and, as the old engineer did not know sufficient English to pass a higher examination, a new first class engineer was appointed over him on Rs. 150 per mensem under strict orders from the Factory Inspector. The new engineer, I was told, was very incompetent. Still, his services had to be retained, as no one else was then procurable on the same pay. This example clearly illustrates the anomalous position of our skilled labour. Will the Government consider the advisability of holding these tests in the Indian vernaculars? †

* Solomon Blum : Labour Economics, New York, 1925, page 188.

† There is no doubt a dearth of books on Engineering in the Indian Verna culars, but this defect can be easily remedied if the Government enoura ge th e translation of suitable text-books in the different languages.

Again, the labourers thus employed are either engaged from day to day according to the daily needs of the factory or they are ordinary full-time workers. Whenever an ordinary full-time labourer wants to go home on leave, he is called upon to leave a substitute without whom he cannot go. Sometimes, extra labourers are kept by the employers to replace the absentees and men on leave. Mr. Burnett Hurst * divides the rank and file of mill-hands in the city of Bombay as follows :—

" (*a*) There is the ordinary full-time worker who is a good, steady, intelligent man, fairly regular in attendance. The bulk of the mill-hands are of this class.

" (*b*) Next is the 'badliwallah' or substitute. There is a considerable amount of absenteeism of operatives through illness and other causes. The mills accordingly employ a number of substitutes to fill temporary vacancies. . . .

" (*c*) The third type is the 'athawada,' or seven-day man, who works for a week and then takes a week's holiday.

" (*d*) Fourth comes the 'mawali' who leads a gay life and works, when it pleases him. . . .

" (*e*) Finally, the 'dada,' or hooligan, who lives by intimidation. He is both lazy and dangerous . . . Fortunately, the number of these is few."

Above these labourers, stand the foremen who are experienced and skilled mill-hands. It must be mentioned in this connection that the full-time worker brings a certain amount of skill to bear on his work and is placed above the casual labourer. The foreman is a full-fledged skilled worker, and is often remunerated for holidays.

The factory-manager controls all classes of labour. He puts each man in his proper place. He marshalls the forces under his command and tries to get the best possible results from his organisation. " Of the 14,863 managers, less than a quarter of the number are Europeans or Anglo-Indians. As is natural, the larger European-owned concerns usually have European managers . . . . Of the cotton mills in Bombay, only about one-tenth have European managers. In the case of the supervising and technical staff, Europeans and Anglo-Indians form about

* Labour and Housing in Bombay, page 48.

one-fifth of the whole number . . . . ."* These figures relate to all Indian industrial establishments working with 20 labourers or more: separate figures for registered factories are not available.

A word about the manager's qualifications. What kind of person ought he to be? And, further, do the Indian conditions conform to that standard? Mr. Hartland Seymour thus describes the manager's qualifications †:—

"It is, of course, essential that he be an expert organiser; it is similarly essential that he has been trained in engineering or whatever industry in which he practises as manager. It is desirable that he shall have been 'through the mill' from apprentice to foreman. He needs more than this though, to be an efficient manager. His job is to co-ordinate labour, skill and materials in their correct proportion, correct order, and in such a way as to produce at a reasonable cost a marketable article for which there is a demand.

"His technical skill and knowledge will enable him more readily to appreciate the difficulties with which his subordinates are likely to be confronted, and his organisation must be well-defined, but, at the same time, it must be elastic enough to permit of any changes in manufacturing process or routine without disrupting and throwing out of gear the manufacturing unit.

"Very often the capable manager is the man, who has worked himself up from the shops by attending technical schools, who has studied sociology and human relationships and psychology, and who also has a fairly comprehensive knowledge of the industrial history of his trade and of his country."

These, then, are the qualifications which are expected of a manager. It is in well-organised factories that the managers possess these qualifications to some extent. In small factories, the manager is sometimes no better than the labourers themselves, except for influence.

The factory-labourers are paid in money. In addition, a considerable amount of payment in kind exists in several Indian

* Census of India, 1921, Vol. II, page 267 (Calcutta, 1924).

† Industrial India, Vol. I, No. 1, August, 1921, page 31. Article on "Principles of Modern Management."

factories. Quarters are sometimes provided free, or at less than their economic rent. Sometimes, grain is given at cheaper prices in the factory than it can be got for elsewhere. But, whatever concessions may be granted, it is a fact that there is a disparity in them from one mill to another. One mill may grant quarters free, the second may let them out at much less than their due rent, the third may sell cheap grain, and so on. These concessions are often termed 'Bonuses.'* "In the big industries, two types have to be sharply distinguished. One is the bonus added to piece-rates to encourage high output. The other is a supplement to wages in the form of a lump grant given at a certain period of the year, or of a percentage (flat) increase in wages. The latter has occasioned much displeasure during the last few years. Ordinarily, this was a War measure granted temporarily to meet the high cost of living. In some cases the bonus was ultimately completely merged in wage rates, in others it was kept distinct. But in some wage-returns, both types of bonus are given together: thus the following is taken from a 1920 return. Annas 9 per 10 hanks plus 20 per cent (cost of living) bonus plus one anna bonus per 100 hanks".† A decrease in bonus has led to several strikes in Bombay, Ahmedabad, Cawnpore and other industrial areas.

* (1) J. H. Kelman: Labour in India (London, 1923), pages 120 and 121:—

"... The simplest bonus is a monthly one granted in many mills for regular attendance. For this, one rupee a month is a common amount, though the sum may be as low as eight annas. In certain mills, this bonus is granted although two working days are missed. In others, two days' absence is permitted to women, but not to men. ...

"... These bonuses are elaborated with reference to the number of months' attendance put in. The fact that eight or nine months are reckoned as entitling a worker to the full bonus is an added proof, were such necessary, of the extent to which annual absences are taken for granted."

(2) The coolies, or entirely unskilled labourers, in the Tata Works, Jamshedpur, who do not come under the Workers' Service Rules get a bonus of two days for every four weeks of unbroken attendance. Between 300 and 400 covenanted and uncovenanted employees in operation departments get a production bonus, the amount of which depends on their position and the nature of their jobs. The total bonus paid is approximately Rs. 90,000 to a lakh per month.

In addition to this, men on a monthly salary get one month's leave with pay, and men on daily rate 14 days with pay for every completed year's service in the Iron and Steel Works, Jamshedpur.

† R. N. Gilchrist: Wages and Profit-sharing (University of Calcutta, 1924), page 299.

The workers get accustomed to them and, sooner or later, mix them up with wages. "The successful working of bonus systems, or profit-sharing, requires a high measure of intelligence, and even fairly high intelligence at times fails to prevent trouble, when bad times mean a reduced bonus or share in profits, or none at all. To expect bonus systems to operate successfully among employees, the great majority of whom are illiterate, is out of the question."

The workers labour under several disabilities. They do not, and often cannot, derive the maximum advantage from their wages. A certain amount of money goes as a tip to the co-workers, the foremen, or the sirdars* who bring them into the factory. Their promotion depends on the confidence which they can command of their immediate superiors, which is further dependent on the amount of money doled out as a bribe. Nay, I should go a step further and say that the very employment of the wage-earner and its further continuance depend on the good-will of the mistris which a few annas can safely buy. Generally speaking, a man earning Rs. 20 a month is expected to pay 0-2-0 to 0-4-0 every month as a bribe.

The factory-manager has not time enough to pay wages direct to his workers. He entrusts this duty to a subordinate, who, by his evil ways, makes a fortune for himself. His share decreases with the augmentation of the income of his client, and is generally confined to the category of unskilled workers.

Fines are imposed on the worker for faults, real or fictitious. The faults may be trivial. They may be due to some misunderstanding on the part of the foreman or the manager. But they may also be genuine. No enquiry is generally made into the nature of the fault, or as to who is responsible for it. The fines are imposed at the sweet will of the manager.† The worker

* Compare J. H. Kelman: Labour in India (page 107)—"In one case it was estimated that a sirdar's wage was from fifty to sixty rupees a month, while his perquisites, if one may call by that name the amazing toll of bakhshish he gathered in, amounted to two hundred or three hundred rupees a month."

† Standing Order No. 3, as presented by the Bombay Mill-owners' Association to the Joint Strike Committee on the 4th October, 1928, reads thus :—

"The decision of the manager upon any question arising out of, in connection with, or incidental to, these Orders shall be final, subject however to appeal to the Managing Agents."

cannot make himself heard. He dare not try. There are no rules and regulations for the levying of fines, and the worker, when he is employed, is not aware of them. Suddenly, on the pay-day, he realises that some deduction has been made from his wages. He feels the loss, but it is only in very rare cases that he raises his finger against his master. In a Government factory, the manager told me that, under instructions from higher authorities, he could not fine any worker. He could, however, do the same thing in a more hard-hearted manner. "Whenever I am displeased with a worker", he said, "I sack him. This is my general practice, and I hold fast to my guns". The arbitrary nature of fines is universal in India. "A factory inspector stated that it was exceptional for fines to be levied, and on the average they formed only 8 to 10 per cent of the earnings—surely a high figure!" *

In a letter by Mr. H. A. Talcherkar entitled "Mill-hands and Law Touts" published in the 'Times of India,' January 11, 1917, the rules and regulations actually in force in a Bombay mill are thus given:—

"When any worker has given due notice and he is found to be irregular or absent during the currency of that notice, his notice will be null and void, and he will have to give a fresh notice. A day's notice without leave means forfeiture of double wages. Over-time work is compulsory, and a workman, who fails to comply through unwillingness, or unfitness for extra exertion, is liable to punishment. A mill-hand about to leave service without notice, or absent from work for five days consecutively, renders himself liable to wholesale forfeiture of wages. Jobbers and mukadams must supply hands to mills, whenever required to do so, or face peremptory dismissal or a fine. Unclaimed wages will not be paid six months after the date on which the payment falls due." These rules are harsh to all intents and purposes, and are still practically observed in a large number of mills in India. But the workers, or their spokesmen, are often consoled by being told that they are not meant to be enforced. If it is so, why should they be brought to the notice of the workers?

The Joint Strike Committee took objection to the manager being the sole judge. The rule provides for an appeal to the Managing Agents and does not evidently permit of a joint consultation with the representatives of workers.

* Burnett Hurst, page 58.

In a factory at Sujanpore (Punjab), two days' wages are deducted for every day of absence without notice. In a factory at Lahore, employing about 292 persons daily on an average, I was told that fines were imposed in very rare cases for gross negligence. Still the total amount of fines came up to Rs. 226 in 1925-26 and Rs. 241 in 1926-27. In their petition to the Rt. Hon'ble E. S. Montague, Secretary of State for India, in November, 1917, the Honorary Secretaries of the Kamgar Hitawardhak Sabha (an association for watching over the interests of Indian workmen) estimated that, assuming the amount of unclaimed and forfeited wages to be Rs. 2,000 per mill per year, no less than Rs. 174,000 would annually accrue from this source." * The report of the Bombay Labour Office on an inquiry into deductions from wages or payments in respect of fines for the first ten months of 1926 gives the following figures † for the 31 mills which supplied apparently reliable figures :—

Subject of Deduction	Numbers of instances in which deductions were made from the wages of employees		Total amount of deductions	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
			Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Breaches of discipline or establishment rules	10,927	4,162	2,460 5 0	641 7 0

Fines are arbitrarily imposed on the workers for coming late to their work. ‡ I have elsewhere said that the workers are mostly over-punctual. Some workers may be late, but this will always

* Burnett Hurst: pages 58 and 59.

† Report of the Bombay Labour Office Enquiry into deductions from wages or payments in respect of fines, 1928, page 25.

‡ Standing Order No. 6, as presented by the Bombay Mill-owners' Association to the Joint Strike Committee on the 4th October, 1928, reads thus :—

". . . . Operatives attending late are liable to be shut out and treated as absent, but may be admitted on payment of a fine."

The question of penalty for late attendance is very controversial, and the Textile Tariff Board, in paragraph 64 on page 139 of their report refrained from expressing their opinion on this point. The Fawcett Enquiry Committee

be the exception rather than the general rule. It is no doubt true that the enforcement of discipline is essential to keep down the wilful absence of workers. Their absence causes loss to the factory. But it is also possible that the workers may not have been given any other chance of securing leave. Some absence cannot be avoided, and so fines should be inflicted only in rare cases after all necessary warnings have been duly given.

It is desirable in the circumstances that ordinary mistakes, or mistakes due to the inherent weaknesses of labourers as human beings, should not necessitate a monetary penalty. These mistakes should be ignored, at least at the start. Nevertheless, warnings should be given to the defaulters, and, after the patience of the manager has been often put to the test, a small fine may be imposed. And, before a fine is actually levied, the labourer should be called upon to explain his conduct, and, if the explanation is satisfactory, no disciplinary action should be taken. If, however, he is fined, an appeal should lie to a higher authority* who should hear it conjointly with a labour representative.

But all this implies power which the worker does not possess. We naturally come to the conclusion that his position cannot be strengthened, unless he learns to organise himself. But, before that comes, it is necessary that he should be made to understand the procedure he may have to adopt in cases of fines. The most essential thing in this connection is the formulation of rules. A definite code of rules should be drawn up in consultation with the employees. They should be duly approved of by the Factory Inspector, hung up on the notice board for the information of labourers and enforced with their

(1928) did not object to the practice of small fines for late attendance. They held that the evidence at their disposal did not show that the power was generally abused.

In the Bombay General Strike of 1928, the Mill-owners' Association published their terms on the 17th May, 1929, giving categorical replies to the 'Seventeen Demands' of the Joint Strike Committee. For the first time, perhaps, they considered it advisable to credit fines in future to a welfare fund. It was a pious wish, which may probably have been actuated by selfish motives. However, it remains to be seen how far this line of action is adhered to.

For the first time, in June, 1926, the Government of India addressed the Local Governments on the subject of fines, and it is important to note that the opinion of labour-unions was not unanimously in favour of their entire abolition.

* Works Committee where it exists.

co-operation. Foremen should be instructed to clearly explain these rules on different occasions to the labourers under their charge. The labourers are poor and fines, as a matter of fact, should not exceed a certain portion of their wages. I suggest that they should not exceed a day's wage in one month and should compulsorily be utilised on their social activities.

In several factories, workers are employed overtime, whenever necessary. I will show later on, that the working hours are already too great. Overtime work, therefore, should never become the rule, as it is at present in many of our factories. And when the labourer works overtime, he should in no case get an overtime wage at less than 1½ of his ordinary wage. Now-a-days overtime wages are generally reckoned at the ordinary rate. In a large number of factories, overtime work is not paid. In a factory in the Gurdaspur district (Punjab), overtime workers are allowed the privilege of leaving the factory earlier next day in proportion to the extra time put in by them.

One thing more. The contract of work is an unwritten one. The day-to-day labourer can leave at any time without serving a notice. He may equally be dismissed in his turn at any moment. For permanent wage-earners, the duration of notice to leave service varies. In some cases the notice required is fifteen days. The poor worker is not aware of it and loses his wages, if he leaves without a formal notice. The following table sums up the total loss which the labourers incurred in the shape of forfeiture of wages for want of notice in a factory at Sujanpore (Punjab) during the year 1925–26 :—

Period :—August, 1925 to July, 1926

1.	One	labourer	getting	Rs.	11	per mensem	lost	4	days' wages.
2.	,,	,,	,,	,,	11	,,	,,	6	,, ,,
3.	,,	,,	,,	,,	11	,,	,,	12	,, ,,
4.	,,	,,	,,	,,	11	,,	,,	5	,, ,,
5.	,,	,,	,,	,,	9	,,	,,	14	,, ,,
6.	,,	,,	,,	,,	10	,,	,,	30	,, ,,
7.	,,	,,	,,	,,	25	,,	,,	12	,, ,,
8.	,,	,,	,,	,,	11	,,	,,	11	,, ,,
9.	,,	,,	,,	,,	11	,,	,,	6	,, ,,

It must be borne in mind that the total number of workers in the factory stood at the average figure of 50. Thus, the

total loss of wages to workers in one year came up to about Rs. 40-5-0. It went into the pockets of the employer. But let us look at the other side of the picture. The employer can dismiss his worker without ceremony. The worker is poor and cannot go to the law courts for the redress of his grievances. Throughout my investigations, I came across only one instance, in which one month's wages were given to a person who was summarily dismissed. It may have been due to the fact that the person concerned was a factory manager and knew all about the forms of law.

The unskilled, as well as the partly skilled, labourer can be disposed of at once. The case with a fully skilled labourer is different. He may or may not be served with a notice. In a factory in the Lahore District (Punjab), the skilled hands serve on individual contracts duly drawn up beforehand. They are usually bound down for a period of five years, before which they cannot leave. The employer, on the other hand, can bid them good-bye by serving a notice of three months. Very curious indeed! Lest the worker should deceive his master, he is called upon to deposit a guarantee fund which is either paid down, or collected by a regular monthly deduction from wages during the course of a year. The guarantee fund amounts to three months' wages.

Irregular and summary dismissals* create heart-burnings, and the arbitrary nature of factory employment must needs continue in the absence of sound labour organisations. It is in the

* Standing Order No. 13, as presented by the Bombay Mill-owners' Association to the Joint Strike Committee, Bombay, on the 4th October, 1928, reads thus :—

"The company may at any time or times and for any period or periods at their discretion in the event of a strike, fire, catastrophe, emergency or epidemic, or when it is necessary to do so because of the state of the trade, stop any machine or machines, department or departments. The operatives employed on those machines or in those departments will be 'played off' i.e. temporarily stopped, without notice and without compensation in lieu of notice. The employees so 'played off' are not to be considered as dismissed from service, but are temporarily unemployed and will not be entitled to wages during such unemployment. Such employees will be given the first chance of work again on the resumption of work on such machines or departments."

The Fawcett Committee were of opinion "that there is unfairness to the employees in the proposed Standing Order so far as it covers 'playing off' on account of the 'state of the trade' without fixing any time-limit whatever. "We

fitness of things that employers should explore every possible avenue of employment, before the order of dismissal is issued. This is never done in our factories, and the sooner it comes to pass, the better for all concerned.

During the last ten or twelve years, factory occupiers in some districts have been in the habit of forming pools among themselves with a view apparently to lessen competition for labour. This prevails mostly in the ginning factories. I invite the special attention of all concerned to this serious drawback, and suggest that all combinations in restraint of labour should be at once stopped.

Several other forces work against the labourers. They are unscrupulously treated. They are even flogged as in carpet factories. In these, the apprentices, whose ages vary between six and nineteen years, are beaten with shoes for every mistake, however trifling it may be. They are flogged when the master-weaver loses his temper—nay, they are even struck with knives and bricks. During the course of my investigations in 1927, I came across four cases in the Punjab in which the apprentices had been thus treated. Corporeal punishment exists in all the small factories, where the manager wields the power of a magistrate and sometimes perpetrates inhuman acts. This makes factory work distasteful.

My inquiries show that an average labourer's family in the Punjab consists of 4.1 persons. There are no statistics available to show the great mortality amongst working class people. Very many children die in the first year of their lives. The various epidemics find a ready prey in them. They have no reserve to fall back upon. The factory-doctor, wherever he exists, dances attendance on the superior staff. He is moreover not highly paid. In some cases he gets the meagre sum of Rs. 5 as a monthly allowance; in others a little more. It is only in properly organised industries that a whole-time qualified physician is met with.

But even then, the factory labourer does not seem to derive any advantage. He is prejudiced against the western system of medicine. This may be due to ignorance, but it is a fact. Thus,

do not think operatives can properly be called upon to contract to their disadvantage to such an extent."

Report of the Bombay Strike Committee, 1928-29 (Bombay, 1929), pp. 33-36.

the labourer, when he falls ill, goes in for a nature cure and leaves himself to his fate. He may have to support himself alone, or a huge family. In either case, his living is from hand to mouth. He knows that he will be starved, if he keeps away from work. He tries to shake off his lethargy and pretends to be well. He attends the factory even in days of slight illness. It is only when the fever is high, or the ailment serious, that he stretches himself on a mat on the floor, which is his only bed. Even then, he is not removed to a hospital, or any segregated quarters. He lingers on and spreads infection to others. He may recover in course of time, or he may succumb to his disease. But, before he bids farewell to this world, he makes the last struggle for existence. He consults some quack, if available. Otherwise, the factory-doctor, if any, is approached. He may be inefficient—in fact he generally is—and may book the patient off to the other world promptly.

This is true of the labourer who has practically nothing in his pocket. But, at the time of illness, he may have a few silver coins with him. Or, when he is seriously ill and becomes despondent, he may approach the factory-manager for the realisation of his wages. The manager receives him cordially. He does not desire that any casualty should be reported from his area and is willing to see him off bag and baggage.

The labourer himself suffers from certain prejudices. He wants to be near his kith and kin in days of serious illness, and loses the least possible time in hastening towards his home. If he recovers, he may come back once again. Otherwise, nothing more is heard of him. This is how our factory worker stands.

It has been established beyond doubt that he prefers to be treated by a hakim.* Unless his mental outlook changes, it is absolutely essential that factories should be enjoined by law to keep whole-time or part-time hakims to treat him free. I, therefore, propose that every factory, employing 50 persons or more, should keep a whole-time physician.† Factories employing less than 50 labourers should be called upon to keep a part-time

* This term is generally applied to a physician well versed in the Oriental school of medicine.

† Or hakim if the workers so desire.

physician who may treat the patients and devote at least two hours daily to them. There should be one physician for every 200 labourers. The local boards can come to the rescue of the factory owners by allowing a special recurring grant for the purpose.

A factory-doctor is essential, especially in a tropical country like ours. My experience proves that the number of patients goes up six or seven-fold, and even more in some cases, in malarial seasons as compared with normal times. In a woollen factory in the Gurdaspur District (Punjab), labourers generally suffer from fever, stomach and bowel complaints. The number of patients there came up to about 120 on an average every day in 1926–27, whereas the total number of labourers working in the mills was about 1,000. In an Amritsar factory, the number of patients in the malarial days is four times as large as on normal occasions. Similarly, in a mill at Chheherta (Punjab), the number of patients in the malarial season is six times as high as in ordinary days. In a cotton mill at Amritsar, the number of patients in malarial days is fifteen to twenty times as high as in normal days.

Before we proceed to further discussion, let me analyse the expenditure of Punjab factory-workers on main groups of commodities. The analysis, it must be remembered, is based on budgets that I collected in 1920 and 1921 and is given below :—

1. Food	68.5
2. Clothing	11.8
3. Fuel and Lighting	5.12
4. House-rent	2.5
5. Medicines	.6
6. Luxuries (Tobacco, Country-Liquor, Charas, Bhang, Opium, etc.) ...	5.2
7. Services (Barber, Laundry, etc.) ...	2.2
8. Travelling	2.0
9. Education	.02
10. Miscellaneous (soap, stationery, etc.) ...	1.72
Total	100.00

My investigations were confined to cotton spinning and flour mills, and related to labourers who earned Rs. 50 or less. Another investigator, who devoted his attention almost entirely to the North Western Railway Workshops, Lahore, and collected 547 family budgets, thus expresses himself :—

"My calculation then showed that 37 per cent of the labourers under my study were living below jail standard, 12 per cent were earning just subsistence wage, 18 per cent of the families were earning just above the bare subsistence level, Rs. 2-14-4 being the surplus per family. This certainly betrayed poverty of income and resources.

"I have considered food-scales allowed in the jail as the bare subsistence allowance which was just sufficient to maintain a man and no more.

"The table is a survey of 547 families showing deficits or surpluses both as calculated according to jail standard and as estimated from their budgets.

Group	Range of income	No. of families	Average no. of members per family	Deficit or surplus according to jail standard		Estimated deficit or surplus as calculated from their budgets		Estimated indebtedness per family
				Deficit	Surplus	Deficit	Surplus	
	Rs. per mensem			Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
1	20 and under	50	2.5	10 7 6	...	4 0 5	...	164 9 6
2	25 ,, ,,	42	3.6	8 11 8	...	6 15 1	...	181 13 7
3	30 ,, ,,	47	3.5	1 13 5	...	0 13 9	...	168 12 0
4	35 ,, ,,	48	4.1	1 3 5	...	0 7 0	...	270 0 0
5	40 ,, ,,	61	4.1	...	3 1 1	1 2 0	...	316 13 7
6	45 ,, ,,	47	4.7	...	3 3 5	0 1 8	...	485 7 3
7	50 ,, ,,	41	4.8	...	6 6 7	...	4 5 0	405 8 10
8	55 ,, ,,	41	5.6	...	10 14 6	...	2 7 11	757 14 0
9	60 ,, ,,	21	5.7	...	10 6 4	...	2 14 4	402 2 8
10	65 ,, ,,	32	5.4	...	20 1 1	...	4 7 11	264 7 9
11	70 ,, ,,	22	5.2	...	28 7 2	...	3 3 9	609 6 0
12	75 ,, ,,	23	6.5	...	22 2 9	...	8 1 2	629 4 0
13	80 ,, ,,	17	6.0	...	29 8 9	...	8 8 10	430 13 4
14	85 ,, ,,	12	5.9	...	38 9 1	...	11 6 11	478 9 1
15	90 ,, ,,	5	6.8	...	40 6 4	...	15 13 2	1,010 0 0
16	95 ,, ,,	11	5.8	...	42 4 3	...	15 4 5	987 8 6
17	100 ,, ,,	5	7.0	...	44 3 1	...	12 4 4	1,172 0 0
18	100 ,, above	22	6.4	...	74 6 3	...	36 14 9	925 5 0

"There could be no more deplorable picture of poverty. Under such economic distress, labour could not help resorting to any desperate means to keep the wolf from the door.

". . . . . Conditions with respect to food were still worse. . . . ." *

The following table *, given by the same investigator, shows the monthly consumption of milk, meat and ghee per family :—

Range of income per month in Rupees.	No. of families	Consumption of meat per family in Rupees	Consumption of milk & ghee per family in Rupees
20 and under ...	50	0 9 7	1 10 9
30 ,, ,, ...	89	0 14 9	2 5 11
40 ,, ,, ...	109	2 0 3	3 8 6
50 ,, ,, ...	88	2 6 8	4 11 11
60 ,, ,, ...	62	2 9 11	7 7 11
70 ,, ,, ...	54	3 7 0	9 2 4
80 ,, ,, ...	40	3 6 7	10 9 2
90 ,, ,, ...	17	5 1 7	13 7 4
100 ,, ,, ...	16	5 2 8	15 4 8
100 ,, above	22	6 1 9	19 4 0

A similar—though more extensive—inquiry was undertaken by the Labour Office, Bombay and a total of 3,076 budgets—2,473 working class family budgets and 603 single men's budgets—was collected between May, 1921 and April, 1922. The number of family budgets † in each income class was as follows :—

Income of total family	No. of families	Percentage of total
Below Rs. 30	68	2.7
Rs. 30 and below Rs. 40 ...	272	11.0
,, 40 ,, ,, 50 ...	834	33.7
,, 50 ,, ,, 60 ...	539	21.8
,, 60 ,, ,, 70 ...	484	19.6
,, 70 ,, ,, 80 ...	167	6.8
,, 80 ,, ,, 90 ...	70	2.8
,, 90 and over	39	1.6
All incomes	2,473	100.0

* Indian Journal of Economics, Vol. VII and Part II—Serial No. 24—October, 1926, pages 103-06.

† See Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Budgets in Bombay by G. Findlay Shirras (Bombay, 1923), pages 5 and 6.

These budgets revealed that an average working class family in the city of Bombay consisted of 4.2 persons, viz., 1.1 men, 1.1 women and 2.0 children under 14, exclusive of .6 dependants living away from it. The monthly income of the family based on the above family budgets was Rs. 52-4-6,* and the average monthly earnings for earning men were Rs. 42-5-7.† All the budgets taken together showed that the earnings for earning men were Rs. 42-9-6 per month (14*s.* 3*d.* per week), for earning women Rs. 16-11-6 (5*s.* 7*d.* per week) and for earning children Rs. 13-13-5 (4*s.* 7*d.* per week). These were average earnings and could not be taken as the average of all working class incomes. The monthly income of 75 per cent of the families for which budgets were collected ranged from Rs. 40 to Rs. 70 and the annual per capital income (men, women and children of the Bombay working classes) was Rs. 149-6-0. The following table‡ gives the analysis of families according to the number of wage-earners :—

INCOME CLASSES	NUMBER OF FAMILIES WITH				
	One wage-earner	Two wage-earners	Three wage-earners	Four wage-earners	Total
Below Rs. 30	64	3	1	...	68
Rs. 30 and below Rs. 40.	192	79	1	...	272
" 40 " " 50.	346	479	9	...	834
" 50 " " 60.	315	200	23	1	539
" 60 " " 70.	267	126	91	...	484
" 70 " " 80.	87	46	31	3	167
" 80 " " 90.	33	21	8	8	70
" 90 and over ...	20	13	4	2	39
All incomes	1,324	967	168	14	2,443
Percentage of Total ...	53.5	39.1	6.8	0.6	100.0

It is apparent from these figures that one earner in the family was the most usual thing, although families with two wage-earners were not uncommon. The Bombay enquiry also showed that there were 154 wage-earners for every 100 families Of these, 104 were men, 42 women and 8 children.

* or 17*s.* 5*d.* per week.

† or 14*s.* 1*d.* per week.

‡ See Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Budgets in Bombay by G. Findlay Shirras (Bombay, 1923), page 11.

A second inquiry was conducted by the Bombay Labour Office into the family budgets of cotton mill workers in Sholapur in 1925. 1,133 family budgets were collected. Out of these, 78 were considered to be unsatisfactory and 1,055 were accepted for final tabulation—902 for the cotton mill workers in the Sholapur city proper and 153 for the families living in the criminal tribes settlement. The method adopted was the 'interview' method which, in the present illiterate condition of Indian workers, is the only one that can be satisfactorily pursued.*

69.1 per cent of the cotton mill workers' families had a monthly income of between Rs. 20 and Rs. 50. 80.7 per cent of them were Hindus and 19.1 per cent were Muslims. The average number of persons in a cotton mill worker's family was 4.68, out of whom 4.57 persons lived in the family, and 0.11 away from the family. Of the former (4.57), 1.60 were adult males, 1.54 adult females, and 1.43 children below 14 years of age. It can thus be seen that, although the number of adult males and females was larger per family in Sholapur than in Bombay, the number of children living in the family was

* Under the 'interview' method, information regarding expenditure on different items during the month is sought direct by investigators from the families. The alternative method consists of a questionnaire which is supplied to the families and answers received thereon. Regarding the utility of the interview method, Dr. Meeker, Commissioner of Labour Statistics, United States, says, (U. S. Monthly Labour Review, Vol. VIII, No. 3, March, 1919, pp. 8 and 9):—"I felt very sceptical of this method of getting at the cost of living. I tested it out in the district of Columbia study by having more than a hundred families representing the different income groups keep itemized account of all expenses for a month. This gave us an excellent check on the expenditures for food, but not for other classes of expenditures. The two methods tallied very closely on food consumption as to kinds, quantities and costs. This convinced me that it is possible to get accurate estimates of itemized family expenses by the 'interview' method . . . Granted that budgets obtained by interview are estimates, there is no other way under heaven of getting at the cost of living with any possibility of accuracy The English have just completed a survey of cost of living by the questionnaire method. Schedules were handed out to housewives by the agents in charge of the employment offices. These were filled out by the housewives without any supervision or assistance whatsoever. Needless to say, the information is not detailed enough to enable a weighted budget to be made up, without which a cost of living index number is utterly impossible. For myself, I have no faith in the questionnaire method of studying cost of living. I would not bother to tabulate the misinformation gathered in that way."

smaller. The following table shows the number of persons in the family in Sholapur by income-groups * :—

INCOME-GROUPS	Persons living in the family: Men	Women	Children under 14	Total	Dependants living away from the family	Total
Below Rs. 20	1.00	1.08	1.12	3.20	0.03	3.23
Rs. 20 and below Rs. 30 ...	1.17	1.26	1.30	3.73	0.07	3.80
,, 30 ,, ,, 40 ...	1.44	1.45	1.57	4.36	0.13	4.49
,, 40 ,, ,, 50 ...	1·73	1.55	1.43	4.71	0.09	4.80
,, 50 ,, ,, 60 ...	1.99	1.73	1.61	5.33	0.09	5.42
,, 60 ,, ,, 70 ...	2.63	2.21	1.53	6.37	0.12	6.49
,, 70 ,, ,, 80 ...	2.36	2.25	1.71	6.32	0.39	6.71
,, 80 ,, ,, 90 ...	2.79	2.79	2.10	7.68	0.29	7.97
All incomes	1.60	1.54	1,43	4.57	0.11	4.68

Workers' families are not entirely dependent for maintenance upon the head of the family. The enquiry in Sholapur reveals that, of the 4.57 persons in the family, 1.96 are workers—mostly adult males—and 2.61 dependants. For every 100 families, there are 149 males, 42 females and 5 child workers. Usually, there are one or two wage-earners in a family though there are cases in which as many as seven wage-earners are met with. The statement† that follows gives the analysis of cotton mill workers' families in Sholapur by income-groups according to the number of wage-earners :—

INCOME-GROUPS	Number of families with: One wage-earner	Two wage-earners	Three wage-earners	Four wage-earners	Five wage-earners	Six wage-earners	Seven wage-earners	Total
Below Rs. 20... ...	72	3	...	...	...	...	...	75
Rs. 20 and below Rs. 30.	91	110	6	...	...	...	...	207
,, 30 ,, ,, 40.	74	114	39	4	...	...	...	231
,, 40 ,, ,, 50.	55	74	48	7	1	...	...	185
,, 50 ,, ,, 60.	19	34	36	10	...	...	...	99
,, 60 ,, ,, 70.	5	12	16	11	5	...	...	49
,, 70 ,, ,, 80.	3	11	8	4	2	...	...	28
,, 80 ,, ,, 90.	6	4	4	7	4	2	1	28
All incomes	325	362	157	43	12	2	1	902
Percentage to total ...	36.0	40.2	17.4	4.8	1.3	.2	.1	100.0

* Report on an Enquiry into Family Budgets of Cotton Mill Workers in Sholapur City (Bombay, 1928), page 6.

† Ibid., page 14.

The Sholapur enquiry further shows how earnings of cotton mill-workers vary greatly. Some earn the paltry sum of Rs. 6 per month, while there are others who receive as much as Rs. 84 every month. The most common wage for men is between Rs. 15 and Rs. 21, while that for women is between Rs. 6 and Rs. 12. A detailed statement* regarding the frequency distribution of earnings of cotton mill workers in Sholapur appears below :—

Monthly Earnings of Cotton Mill Workers	Number of wage-earners			Total
	Men	Women	Children	
Below Rs. 6	16	6	3	25
Rs. 6 and below Rs. 9 ...	36	131	12	179
,, 9 ,, ,, 12 ...	20	139	7	166
,, 12 ,, ,, 15 ...	90	9	1	100
,, 15 ,, ,, 18 ...	240	5	1	246
,, 18 ,, ,, 21 ...	365	...	...	365
,, 21 ,, ,, 24 ...	118	...	...	118
,, 24 ,, ,, 27 ...	63	...	...	63
,, 27 ,, ,, 30 ...	38	...	...	38
,, 30 ,, ,, 33 ...	31	...	...	31
,, 33 ,, ,, 36 ...	72	...	...	72
,, 36 ,, ,, 39 ...	66	...	...	66
,, 39 ,, ,, 42 ...	55	...	...	55
,, 42 ,, ,, 45 ...	32	...	...	32
,, 45 ,, ,, 48 ...	8	...	...	8
,, 48 ,, ,, 51 ...	6	...	...	6
,, 51 ,, ,, 54 ...	3	...	...	3
,, 54 ,, ,, 57 ...	2	...	...	2
,, 57 ,, ,, 60 ...	2	...	...	2
,, 60 ,, ,, 63 ...	2	...	...	2
,, 63 ,, ,, 66 ...	...	...	...	...
,, 66 ,, ,, 69 ...	...	...	...	...
,, 69 ,, ,, 72 ...	2	...	...	2
,, 72 ,, ,, 75 ...	...	...	...	...
,, 75 ,, ,, 78 ...	1	...	...	1
,, 78 ,, ,, 81 ...	1	...	...	1
,, 81 ,, ,, 84 ...	5	...	...	5
Total ...	1,274	290	24	1,588

* Report on an Enquiry into Family Budgets of Cotton Mill Workers in Sholapur City (Bombay, 1928), page 14.

So far regarding the cotton mill-workers. Part II of the Sholapur report treats of the 153 families residing in the criminal tribes settlement. A majority of them have an income below Rs. 40 per month. Only 19 per cent earn more than Rs. 40, whereas the percentage is as high as 43.1 for the cotton mill workers in Sholapur.

The average settlement-family comprises 4.90 persons. Of these, 1.52 are adult males, 1.57 adult females and 1.81 children. The number of dependants living away from the family is conspicuous by its absence. The following table* shows the number of persons in the family according to income-groups :—

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="3">INCOME-GROUPS.</th><th colspan="4">CRIMINAL TRIBES SETTLEMENT</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="4">Persons living in the family</th></tr>
<tr><th>Men</th><th>Women</th><th>Children under 14</th><th>Total</th></tr>
<tr><td>Below Rs. 20 ... ...</td><td>1.07</td><td>1.07</td><td>1.52</td><td>3.66</td></tr>
<tr><td>Rs. 20 and below Rs. 30 ...</td><td>1.13</td><td>1.32</td><td>1.87</td><td>4.32</td></tr>
<tr><td>„ 30 „ „ 40 ...</td><td>1.85</td><td>1.88</td><td>1.65</td><td>5.38</td></tr>
<tr><td>„ 40 „ „ 50 ...</td><td>2.21</td><td>1.93</td><td>2.29</td><td>6.43</td></tr>
<tr><td>„ 50 „ „ 60 ...</td><td rowspan="4">2.53</td><td rowspan="4">2.47</td><td rowspan="4">2.00</td><td rowspan="4">7.00</td></tr>
<tr><td>„ 60 „ „ 70 ...</td></tr>
<tr><td>„ 70 „ „ 80 ...</td></tr>
<tr><td>„ 80 „ „ 90 ...</td></tr>
<tr><td>All incomes ... ...</td><td>1.52</td><td>1.57</td><td>1.81</td><td>4.90</td></tr>
</table>

It is clear from this table that the increase of income is accompanied by an increase in the number of persons in the family. Of the 4.90 persons in the family, 1.93 are earners while 2.97 are dependants. There are 193 wage-earners for 100 families: of these, 138 are adult males, 52 adult females and 3 children. The most common wage earned by adult males varies from Rs. 15 to Rs. 21, while that for adult females varies from Rs. 6 to Rs. 9.

Another enquiry was conducted by the Bombay Labour Office into the family budgets of the working classes in Ahmedabad in 1926. Three in every hundred families were visited by lady

* Report on an Enquiry into Family Budgets of Cotton Mill Workers in Sholapur City (Bombay, 1928), pages 26 and 27.

investigators. In all, 985 family budgets were collected. Out of these, 872 were accepted for final tabulation.

An analysis of the families, according to income classes, shows that 80.85 per cent of them have an income of between Rs. 20 and Rs. 60 per month. The income class, in which the largest number of families is to be found, is Rs. 40 and below Rs. 50. Of the families considered, 78.67 per cent were Hindu, 20.18 per cent Muslim, and 1.15 per cent Christian.

The average number of persons per family in Ahmedabad is 4.00. Of these, 3.87 live in the family and 0.13 away from it. Amongst 3.87 persons living in the family, 1.66 are earners and 2.21 dependants. Of the earners, 1.25 are men, 0.37 women and 0.04 children. It is interesting to note that the average number of persons living in the Ahmedabad family is low as compared with Sholapur and Bombay, where it stands at 4.57 and 4.2 respectively. As regards the number of earners per 100 working class families in Bombay city, Sholapur and Ahmedabad we find that the figures are 154, 196 and 166 respectively. In almost half the number of cases, there is only one wage-earner in Ahmedabad; in about 40 per cent of the families there are two wage-earners; and the highest number of earners recorded in a family comes to 5. The analysis of Ahmedabad families according to the number of wage-earners by income classes may be given below*:—

INCOME-CLASSES	NUMBER OF FAMILIES WITH					TOTAL
	One wage-earner	Two wage-earners	Three wage-earners	Four wage-earners	Five wage-earners	
Below Rs. 20	14	3	...	...	...	17
Rs. 20 and below Rs. 30 ...	118	27	1	...	...	146
„ 30 „ „ „ 40 ...	103	74	5	...	...	182
„ 40 „ „ „ 50 ...	102	99	17	2	...	220
„ 50 „ „ „ 60 ...	43	92	17	5	...	157
„ 60 „ „ „ 70 ...	25	26	19	3	...	73
„ 70 „ „ „ 80 ...	7	18	16	3	1	45
„ 80 „ „ „ 90 ...	10	9	9	4	...	32
Total ...	422	348	84	17	1	872
Percentage to Total ...	48.39	39.91	9.63	1.95	0.12	100.00

* Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Family Budgets in Ahmedabad (Bombay, 1928), page 5,

In Sholapur and Ahmedabad, the Labour Office collected information regarding the relationship of the various members of the family to its head with the twofold purpose of ascertaining the prevailing type of the family and of determining the relation between income and the type of the family. Families were divided into two classes, natural and joint—the first comprising a family of husband, wife and unmarried children, and the latter covering "a family union of persons and their wives through males from a common male ancestor."* The tabulation of the budgets showed that 64 per cent of the families in Ahmedabad were natural while 36 per cent were joint. The corresponding percentages for the Sholapur cotton mill workers were 44 and 56 respectively. It was further evident that, as the income increased, the percentage of natural to total families went down, while, in the case of joint households, an exactly opposite tendency was discernible.

The data collected in the course of Ahmedabad and Sholapur enquiries showed that, in the former, 35 per cent of the natural families contained only the husband and the wife, 21 per cent contained a child in addition, and 15 per cent contained two children below the age of 14. The Sholapur investigation showed that only 24 per cent of the natural families contained a husband and a wife. Regarding joint families, the composition differed greatly, and it was difficult to single out any prevailing type of composition.

In the 872 families considered in Ahmedabad, there were 1,443 workers. Of these, 1,000 were men, 320 women and 33 children. The monthly earnings in many cases were as low as six rupees, but the majority or 61 per cent of them had earnings varying from Rs. 15 to 33. No woman-worker got more than Rs. 33 per month, and no child-worker was in receipt of Rs. 15 every month.

The incomes of cotton mill workers in Ahmedabad were separately tabulated. Out of a total of 1,443 labourers, 1,049 worked in cotton mills. Of the latter, 814 or 77.60 per cent were men and 217 or 20.69 per cent were women and 18 or 1.71 per cent were children. Their earnings were higher than other

* Report on an Enquiry into Family Budgets of Cotton Mill Workers in Sholapur City (Bombay, 1928), page 7.

workers in Ahmedabad. They were also higher than those of the Sholapur cotton mill workers.

The mill-hands, generally speaking, fall into the clutches of the bania soon after they begin their work in the factory. My enquiries showed that 62 per cent of the labourers in the Punjab were in debt. In two mills at Amritsar, the percentage was as high as 79. The Ahmedabad worker is heavily in debt. The Sholapur enquiry stated that no less than 63 per cent of the families reported interest on debt. The amount of debt varies from a few rupees to many times the monthly earnings.

The amount of indebtedness is influenced by various circumstances. If a bania is a shopkeeper with his shop located near the quarters of the workers, all sorts of facilities to get into debt are easily given with the result that the labourer gets entangled with no hope of early recovery. Or, the workers' quarters may be few and far between. They may be scattered over different areas; the workers may have been accommodated in groups in private houses. In such cases, there is no hope for the money-lender shopkeeper. The bania comes and pays a casual visit. He gets into touch with workers and encourages some of them, who are reliable in his eyes, to take loans. He asks them to approach him for help at any odd hour, and advises them to spend extravagantly on marriage and death ceremonies. This is done and loans are contracted for various purposes and under various pretences. My enquiries prove that the main causes of indebtedness are the following :—

(1) Marriage.

(2) Illness and death.

(3) Repayment of debt inherited from parents.

(4) Insufficient wages and unemployment.

(5) Intemperate habits.

Marriages come first in order of importance. In 40 per cent of the cases in the Punjab, it is marriage that brings the labourer into debt. Loans are contracted for its due celebration and, in some cases, for the actual purchase of the wife. Funeral ceremonies also entail a huge monetary sacrifice. The priests have to be fed, and various rites have to be performed. This is possible if the money-lender is accommodating.

The money-lender is usually a bania. He keeps his accounts in a loose running sort of bahi* which can be easily tampered with. Again, the money-lender is sometimes very crafty. He is much too shrewd for the ignorant labourers.† The profession of money-lending is honourable in itself; but, if it transgresses the limits of honesty, there is no end to the troubles which it may bring in its train. The rate of interest charged is generally high; in some cases it goes up to as much as 300 per cent per annum. One anna per rupee per month is a common rate. The Ahmedabad Enquiry shows how, in the majority of cases, the rate of interest varies from 12 to 24 per cent. "But higher rates of interest are not uncommon, and in fact in one case the rate of interest reported was as high as 225 per cent." ‡ The state of affairs is indeed alarming, and an intervention from Government in limiting the rate of interest will be greatly welcome.

There are a large number of lenders who have not adopted money-lending as a profession. The factory-labourers are often accommodated by one of their own class.§ Money is lent out in small sums. No accounts are regularly kept and maintained

* The indigenous account-book of the bania.

† One instance from a rural area in the Punjab will depict the petty money-lenders in their true colours :—

"In my own village there is a poor Zemindar, who, in order to pay his land-revenue, borrowed a sum of Rs. 7 from the money-lender of the village. As the borrower was quite illiterate, he did not know what he wrote in his accounts. After some time, to his utter dismay and astonishment, legal proceedings were taken against the poor debtor by the wily money-lender for the recovery of Rs. 700 . . . The suit was dismissed in the lower court and, in the appellate court, the appeal was accepted and the decree of Rs. 700 passed." (*Vide* Punjab Legislative Council Debates, 12th December, 1925; speech by Syed Mohd. Hussain, page 1778).

Report on the Working of the Co-operative Societies in the Punjab for the year ending 31st July, 1925, page 5—Footnote by the Registrar :—

"As an instance of the need for understanding accounts, take the Rahti system of Gurgaon. Each sum of Rs. 10 owed by the debtor is a Rahti, and is paid in 12 monthly instalments of one rupee. This looks simple and appeals to the ignorant borrower, but the rate works out at 44 per cent. Interest from 37½ to 304 per cent is charged on instalments in arrears. The system is appropriately called the Rahti (perpetual) loan."

‡ Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Family Budgets in Ahmedabad (Bombay, 1928), page 22.

§ The Sirdars are money-lenders almost everywhere.

by the labourer-moneylender, as he should be called. He realises his interest every month and, so long as this is paid regularly, no difficulty arises. When any borrower refuses to pay, he is threatened in ways more than one, but usually in the form of violence, and the money lent is thereby extracted from him.

The factory labourers are also financed by the vagrant Pathans who come down from the frontier for purposes of trade, adopting money-lending as a secondary profession. They realise their money from the borrowers at the point of the lathi.*

The money-lender usually advances money at exorbitant rates of interest. Why? He knows that there is a great risk in the undertaking. The labourer may run away, as he does in certain circumstances. He may die, or he may in the long run prove utterly incapable of the repayment of debt. A regulation fixing the rate of interest at a maximum of 12 per cent will bring very good results in its wake. The extravagance of factory labourers will be partly checked, as it will then be impossible for the bania to advance money without reliable security.

The standard of living of our workers is deplorably low. There has been no doubt an almost imperceptible progress of late. Still, their expenses on education are nil or negligible. Medicines and charities,† too, account for an extremely small proportion of their expenditure. A large part of the income is spent on food-stuffs.

The standard of living may be described as the aggregate earnings of the population divided by the total number. But it is something more than an arithmetical calculation inasmuch as it gives rise to many subtle questions as to the distribution of money-income. It relates to the division of income into necessaries of life, conventional necessaries and luxuries. For each class of labourers a certain amount of money is essential for maintaining its members. In addition, it is necessary to have more than a bare minimum, if efficiency is to be maintained. The earning power of the labourers has increased slowly and steadily, but there has been only a slight change in their condition—especially in that of the unskilled labourers.

* The lathi is the lower part of a stem of the male bamboo, about 6 feet long, sometimes loaded with metal.

† These are largely religious gifts.

Mr. G. Findlay Shirras comes to the following conclusion as a result of the Bombay Enquiry*:—

"It will be seen from an analysis of the statistics that the standard of living or of comfort is not a high one. Indeed, although the customs of Indian life are changing more rapidly than was formerly the case, it must be admitted that the standard is still low and, in the family earning under Rs. 30, very low. There has, however, been progress. The worker's earning capacity has in the long run increased. Necessaries for efficiency, such as suitable house accommodation and conventional necessaries are not what they ought to be. The expenditure on education is little or nothing, and children in the mills are not trained up for work, as are the children of working class families in other chief industrial countries. Moreover the families are not, as a rule, able to save to support themselves in sickness or in old age. One is driven to the conclusion that teaching to spend more or less wisely is more important than saving in cases where there is a stubbornly low standard of life . . . ."

The analysis of Bombay, Sholapur and Ahmedabad budgets referred to above gives the following percentage-distribution † o expenditure on the main groups of commodities :—

—	Bombay working-class budgets (1921–1922)	Sholapur cotton-mill workers' budgets (1925)	Ahmedabad working-class budgets (1926)
Food	56.32	52.76	57.90
Fuel and Lighting ...	7.29	10.28	7.04
Clothing	8.40	12.70	9.45
Bedding and Household necessaries	2.26	1.08	1.16
House Rent	7.67	6.72	11.74
Miscellaneous	18.06	16.46	12.71
Total ...	100.00	100.00	100.00

*See Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Budgets in Bombay—G. Findlay Shirras (Bombay, 1923), page 13.

† Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Family Budgets in Ahmedabad, (Bombay, 1928), page 15.

It is interesting to compare these figures, as also the percentage group expenditures in different parts of India, with the United Kingdom. The following statement * will be useful :—

COUNTRY	Period to which the figures relate	PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON					TOTAL
		Food	Fuel and lighting	Clothing	House rent	Miscellaneous	
Bombay Presidency †.	1921	59.2	This is included under the heading 'Miscellaneous'.	14.4	3.4	23.0	100.0
Bengal (Faridpur) ‡ Agricultural family in comfort.	1906–10	58.2	0.8 includes only lighting.	10.0	10.0 (agricultural rent).	21.0	100.0
Agricultural family in indigence.	1906–10	68.5	1.0 includes only lighting.	9.0	4.5 (agricultural rent).	17.0	100.0
Non-agricultural family in comfort.	1906–10	61.7	0.8 includes only lighting.	10.0	2.3 (agricultural rent).	25.2	100.0
Non-agricultural family in indigence.	1906–10	73.5	0.4 includes only lighting.	10.0	1.9 (agricultural rent).	14.2	100.0
Punjab §	1920–21	68.5	5.12	11.8	2.5	13.7 (includes also medicines, luxuries, services, travelling, etc.)	100.0
Assam ‖	1914	83.2	1.2 (lighting only).	10.2	Not stated	5.4	100.0
United Kingdom ¶ ...	1920	52.4	6.4	19.5	6.8	14.9	100.0

* Dr. Engel's social enquiries and the laws that he has formulated therefrom apply also in the case of India. He observes that the plane of economic prosperity is in inverse proportion to the percentage of expenditure on physical necessaries.

† Figures collected during the census of 1921 for Konkan, Gujarat, Deccan, Karnatak, Sind.

‡ The Economic Life of a Bengal District : J. C. Jack.

§ As collected by the Author in 1920 and 1921.

‖ Report of the Assam Labour Enquiry Committee, 1921–22.

¶ Final Report on the Cost of Living by the Joint Committee (Parliamentary Committee—Trades-Union Congress), 1921.

One conclusion stands out prominently. In the United Kingdom, where the standard of living is higher than in India, the proportionate expenditure on food * is lower. The remarks of Mr. Findlay Shirras on the cost and consumption of food in the Bombay city appear to be almost universally applicable in India:—

"Owing to caste and similar causes, there are variations in the details of articles consumed. The Ghati from the Western Ghats consumes more jowari and bajri than rice, while the Konkani immigrant (who forms the predominant part of Bombay's industrial population) is chiefly a consumer of rice. The Gujarati again consumes more ghee (clarified butter) and sweetmeats than his confrêres. The Mohammadan is a consumer of mutton and beef. . . The industrial worker of Bombay is in diet largely vegetarian." †

The Punjabi is accustomed to wheat or barley or jawar, as also is his brother from the United Provinces. The Bengali is fond of rice and fish and sticks to them, even when at work in northern India. Wheat and rice have equal importance from the point of view of the consumption of the working-class family in Ahmedabad. The staple food of workers is rice in Bombay. It is jowari in Sholapur. Vegetable oil is used in cooking by the labouring classes generally in Bengal, the United Provinces, Central Provinces and Bihar and Orissa, whereas clarified butter is used in the Punjab as also in Ahmedabad by labourers whose means allow. It is of interest to observe that the Hindu workers in Ahmedabad change their staple food according to the seasons: they use bajri during the monsoon and wheat during summer.

* "The monthly expenditure on all food articles is nearly 58 per cent of the total, or nearly Rs. 23 per month. Of the total expenditure, 12 per cent is on wheat and 11 per cent on rice. Amongst cereals, bajri is next in importance to wheat and rice. The consumption of jowari and other cereals, appears to be negligible. Among pulses, turdal and gram occupy a prominent place and account for 2.75 per cent of the total expenditure. Among other articles of food, ghee seems to occupy a very important place. The monthly expenditure on ghee is 6.39 per cent of the total expenditure, and the actual cost per month per family is Rs. 2-8-0. . . The next important item amongst other articles of food is vegetables including potatoes and onions. This item accounts for 4.30 per cent of the monthly expenditure. Milk and butter-milk account for 2.20 per cent of the monthly expenditure, and condiments and spices for 1.87 per cent. Refreshments taken outside account for 2.32 per cent of the monthly expenditure." (Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Family Budgets in Ahmedabad—Bombay, 1928—pages 15 and 16).

The average monthly expenditure on food in the case of Sholapur mill-workers is 49.25 per cent of the total expenditure.

† Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Budgets in Bombay: G. Findlay Shirras (Bombay, 1923), pages 16 and 17.

The expenses of labourers are rather disproportionate. An increase in their earning capacities is attended by an increased consumption of luxuries, adding nothing to their efficiency. Moreover, a large number of labourers are so seriously addicted to the use of bhang, charas, opium * and liquor that they would try to curtail some of the necessaries of life for a passing pleasure. Therefore, physical and intellectual degeneration has set in amongst them partly as a result of their intemperate ways of life.

A large portion of their income is spent in country-liquor immediately after the pay-day. Many of the workmen in some mills absent themselves for a day after the receipt of their wages. The factory work thereby suffers. The manager of the Mela Ram Cotton Mills, Lahore, used in 1920 to close his mills for 24 hours after the pay-day, because it was sometimes impossible to carry on the work with a small number of operatives. But this aggravates the situation still further. The workers—one and all—are let loose to give free play to their inclinations.

Much may be done by example and persuasion. I cannot at this stage help mentioning the great moral influence wielded by a factory-owner at Amritsar over his employees. He is pious and virtuous and has been successful in greatly reforming his workmen who present a marked contrast to the labourers in the neighbouring mills. It is very difficult to quote the precise amount of money the factory labourer spends on luxuries. It is still more difficult to quote the average figure as it is the average of extremes. Further still, it is the male population which is mainly addicted to charas, bhang, opium † or liquor. Women,

* C. F. Andrews: Opium Evil in India, page 16:—"But the most serious fact of all concerning opium in India at the present time is that, everywhere in the industrial centres and especially where there are cotton mills. . . . the opium consumption . . . shows a fatal tendency to rise. A very great deal of this increased consumption is due to the almost universal habit of mothers engaged in the cotton mills during the long working hours of the day 'doping' their babies with opium each day, when they go out to work, in order to keep them quiet."

† ". . . . . The real reason, for which opium was given, was to stop the child from crying and ensure sleep when the mother was away at work, but all sorts of virtues were in addition attributed to it. . . . .

"So far as the Punjab and Northern India are concerned, investigations show that the custom is practically non-existent at the present time. In the Simla Hills opium is being fairly extensively given to children, for the women there have to work all day long in the fields and their custom forbids them taking their children out of their houses, till they are two years old. In the other parts of the Punjab and in the central districts, e.g., Ferozepore, Ludhiana, and Jullundur, which are populated chiefly by Sikhs and where the consumption of opium recorded is one of the highest in the whole of India—with the exception of, perhaps, Assam

generally, do not drink. I have shown that more than 5 per cent of the money incomes of classes within the range of my inquiries in 1920 and 1921 was spent on luxuries. In the case of the lowest class of workers, the percentage is still higher. The consumption of alcoholic drinks brings down the productivity of workers and impoverishes their resources. The following table will throw much light on this point. It was prepared by me after personal interviews with the 507 operatives concerned :—

Pioneer Flour Mills, Shahdara (1920)

Departments	Total no. in the Department	Drinkers (including charas*- and bhang†-takers, etc.)	Smokers
Mistris	2	1	2
Fitters	5	...	5
Drivers	2	2	2
Workshop men ...	6	5	4
Cleaners	18	8	17
Washermen ...	2	2	2
Packers	24	14	23
Rulemen	4	1	3
Oilmen	2	2	2
Pallahdars ...	20	5	18
Coalmen	3	1	3
Firemen	2	...	2
Women-workers ...	10	...	10
Cobblers	2	1	2
Bagsmen	2	...	2
Total ...	104	42	97

and Calcutta—cases of doping infants with opium are very rare. In the United Provinces, the custom is still prevalent in certain parts, but is showing signs of unpopularity. From a rough general survey of the other parts of India, it is found that although opium is still given extensively to infants in some of the large industrial areas like Bombay, Calcutta and the United Provinces where women have to do long hours of work in the factories, yet this custom is becoming less and less prevalent especially in the rural areas." Capital (Calcutta), 17th January, 1929, page 103—columns 2 and 3.

* Hemp-leaves.

† The exudation of the flowers of hemp collected with the dew and prepared for use as an intoxicating drug. It is collected, it is said, by persons running through a field of ganja with leathern aprons. Urdu, Hindi and English Dictionary, Platts, London, 1884.

Rustomjea Flour Mills, Badami Bagh (1920)

Departments	Total no. in the Department	Drinkers (including charas- and bhang-takers, etc.)	Smokers
Mistris	2	1	2
Rulemen	9	6	8
Pipemen	33	20	30
Pallahdars ...	24	17	19
Workshop ...	13	...	13
Total ...	81	44	72

Mela Ram Cotton Mills, Lahore (1920)

Departments	Total no. in the Department	Drinkers (including charas- and bhang-takers, etc.)	Smokers
Reeling { 22 men ...	...	10	22
Reeling { 31 women .	53	2	31
Blow-room ...	14	4	14
Carding	22	10	22
Drawing	21	16	20
Slubbing	8	6	8
Intermediate, etc. ...	13	5	12
Roving	30	15	28
Engine-room ...	22	6	20
Ring	53	14	50
Mule	86	36	84
Total ...	322	124	311

Out of 507 men and women, 41 per cent drank or took opium, charas, or bhang; while 95 per cent smoked. The consumption of drink usually takes the form of an immediate expenditure of about 3 per cent of their wages on country-liquor on the morning following pay-day. It is enough to intoxicate. By the afternoon, the effects have worn off, and the worker spends the evening shopping. It must be remembered that the above list includes only those persons who declared themselves, or who were otherwise seen, as confirmed drinkers and smokers.

There must have been many more besides, who felt shy of disclosing their habits, and who could not in any way be detected.

According to the Bombay Labour Office Enquiry into working class family budgets in Ahmedabad, about 88 per cent of the families reported expenditure on tobacco including *bidis, hukka* and *gudaku*. Smoking is very common in Ahmedabad, and the average monthly expenditure on it amounted to Re. 1-2-9 per family. In the Bombay city, over 71 per cent reported expenditure on liquor in the last enquiry; in Sholapur the percentage was 43.*

There are no trustworthy data to show the proportion of factory-workers consuming intoxicants in India. Mr. J. P. Brander, Collector of Bombay, while giving his evidence before the Bombay Excise Committee, said that "he was informed by the excise staff that at least 70 per cent of the Bombay working men were drinkers." "Excessive drinkers," he further added, "were less than 10 per cent."† Drinking in Bombay is carried to an excess on festive occasions and some of the chawl-owners encourage this vice by keeping their own shops.

The question of intemperance is indeed very serious. All the principal religions prohibit the consumption of liquor. Still, it is easy for the labourers to fall a prey to the liquor-shop dealer from the facilities which the latter provides with his shop near the quarters. The result is that a large number of them indulge in intoxicants on several occasions in addition to an immediate expenditure after the pay-day.

Gambling is another vice to which the labourers are addicted. I made searching inquiries into the condition of a mill at Amritsar in May, 1927, and was led to the conclusion that 60 per cent of the unskilled labourers gambled injudiciously. There were cases in which some labourers had lost five or six rupees at a time. A large number gambled for a few annas, but, even then, the sum lost or gained represented an appreciable portion of their wages.

Intemperance, gambling and other social vices, which have corrupted the factory-labourer, could be easily brought under

* Report on an Enquiry into Family Budgets of Cotton Mill Workers in Sholapur city—Bombay, 1928, page 25.

† 'Times of India,' May 24th, 1923.

control through counter-attractions. Temperance societies and societies for the promotion of scientific knowledge exist in many big towns. They have so far confined their attention to the city population. It would be a boon if these two kinds of societies were to extend their activities to the factory-areas. They could bring the labourers round by popular lectures, by night schools, by educative cinema shows and by temperance canteens. An experiment in this direction is well worth trying. Again, all liquor shops situated close to factory-areas should be at once closed. It must be carefully borne in mind that gambling, drinking, or even ignorantly spending money on useless pursuits of life brings down the actual standard of living of the labourer who is addicted to one or all these evils.

The factory population, on the whole, is sunk in poverty. Their living is practically from hand to mouth.* So long as the labourer is capable enough to carry on his daily calling, the family manages to make both ends meet, though not easily. But, as soon as he falls ill, debts are incurred and, after this source has been completely tapped, starvation begins. Living in this miserable plight, it is but natural for some of these half-starved labourers to take to evil ways of living.

There is an additional trouble in their way. Near their houses exists the shop of a bania who advances them all the necessaries of life on credit, realising the price on the pay-day. He sells at rates dearer than those of the market and makes a great profit by adulterating his food-stuffs. To illustrate this, I may state the instance of a factory shop-keeper who was once

* Compare in this connection the report of the Labour Office, Bombay, on an enquiry into middle class unemployment in the Bombay city :—

"About 10 per cent of the unemployed persons maintained themselves on savings. As persons, who were never previously employed, could persumably not have saved, these 119 cases probably relate to a total of 818 only. This means that 14·55 per cent of the total had put by money during the period of their employment. But it is significant that these savings are usually stated to be from Provident Fund Benefits received after leaving previous employment. Cases of savings out of the salary actually received are very few." (Report on an enquiry into middle class unemployment in the Bombay Presidency, Bombay, 1927, page 15).

This statement refers to those persons who have had an income of at least Rs. 50 per month. The condition of labourers must naturally be very pitiable, especially when we know that they do not avail themselves of any Provident Fund schemes.

selling *atta* (wheat-flour) at 6½ seers per rupee, when the same, or rather superior, quality could be had in the bazaar at 7½ seers for a rupee. Again, the labourers buy their provisions in small instalments and pay high prices accordingly. This drawback assumes an acute form in Bombay, Ahmedabad and Calcutta. Most of the up-country labourers who earn their living in these industrial centres are 'single men.' Some of them prepare their own meals, while others dine in restaurants. These 'eating-rooms' exactly resemble the sweet-meat shops in Bombay, a description of which appears in a report submitted to the Municipal Corporation by Dr. Goldsmith and Dr. Hormasji. They examined 505 shops and wrote:—

"Forty-five were found quite unfit for the purpose of preparing articles for human consumption in, and twenty-one were described as filthy . . . . In fifty instances, privies were found in dangerous proximity to the room used for manufacture of sweet-meats. . . . . We have frequently seen sweet-meats stored in the immediate proximity of the privy. In the majority of cases, the floor forms the usual place of storage, preferably in some dark and dirty room . . . . There is hardly any cleanliness in the making of these sweet-meats. Everything is done on the bare floor. There are no proper tables or even benches. The sweets are exposed for sale in open trays to dust and dirt, and flies are allowed to swarm over them in large numbers."

The sweet-meat shops, as also the restaurants which cater for the labourers, encourage them to buy on credit, realizing their bill after they get their wages. If a part of the bill remains unpaid, the balance is carried over to the next month and exorbitant interest is charged thereon.

This evil can be checked in one way. The labourers are now paid every month (with about 7 to 15 days' wages always in arrears). It must be laid down by law, that weekly payment of wages should in future be made for workers earning less than Rs. 50 per mensem. Weekly wages will enable poor labourers to buy things for cash rather than on credit, and thereby to pay lower prices for the same articles. Moreover, the labourers will be sufficiently independent to make their purchases in the cheapest possible market. Credit purchases make them over-liberal: they buy much more than their scanty means allow.

One great utility of weekly payments is that they can help labourers to distribute their money uniformly throughout the month and thereby obtain the maximum satisfaction from their purchases. Prudence and foresight can play their part usefully and well, when the period of purchase extends over one week rather than over one month. In the case of monthly wages, a relatively larger portion of wages is spent a few days after their receipt, leaving only a small margin for the remaining part of the month. And the wages are usually in arrears for more than a week—sometimes, more than a month—at the time of strikes. Their payment is withheld,* and the poor labourers are greatly harassed. With a view to remove some of these difficulties, Mr. Chaman Lal introduced a Bill in the Legislative Assembly on the 23rd September, 1924, for the weekly payment of wages to workmen, domestic servants and other employees. The Bill was circulated to the various interested bodies for opinion. All the Provincial Governments, primarily responsible for the welfare of labour, were against the measure. It must be remembered that the question of weekly wages was raised by Lord Olivier, Secretary of State for India under the Labour Government. He wanted some light to be thrown on the subject as he had received several complaints from workers against the withholding of their wages by the employers. The Bill, as moved by Mr. Chaman Lal, was of a wide nature, but it does not mean that the experiment ought not to have been tried within the small and manageable field of factory workers. The factory-owners did not like weekly

* Only recently, there have been some cases of this nature. The general body of workers in Bombay struck work in May, 1929. Their April wages were withheld by the mill-owners and were not paid till the matter had assumed a serious form. 'The Pioneer' for Wednesday, May 22nd, 1929 (page 5, column 5) published the following:—

"The 'Bombay Chronicle' publishes the copy of a red letter bearing the Bombay G.P.O. mark, stated to have been addressed to the President of the Mill-owners' Association . . . . . .

"The letter says:—Your action in withdrawing the strikers' April wages is meant to force the strikers to work by starvation. You, therefore, are warned to pay them off on May 21, failing which all members of your Association will either be shot, bombed, or poisoned . . . . ."

This shows how the workers are tormented. A suit in a civil court would be tedious and expensive. Under these circumstances, if workers become furious there would be nothing to wonder at.

payment, because it would have forced them to increase their clerical staff.* They did not care for the immense relief which the workers would get thereby. Even now, most of the jute mill workers get weekly wages. Some mill-owners in Ahmedabad pay fortnightly wages and reformatory labour in the Punjab is paid, wherever possible, after every four days. These precedents ought to have brought round the callous-hearted employers. But the appeals to justice and reason made by the labour members of the Assembly were of no avail and the Bill was consequently withdrawn. Sir Bhupendra Nath, however, assured the House that he would inquire into cases, where the payment of wages had been delayed to the workers and introduce a Bill to cover such irregularities, if they existed.

It is no doubt true that the weekly payment of wages would necessitate certain adjustments. The employers are afraid of losing their interest and do not want any compulsion to be brought to bear upon them. The measure is nevertheless useful and deserves a whole-hearted support from the enlightened public. The labourers realise its need and some of the unions extended their support to the Bill, when it was circulated for opinion.

But it must be understood that the weekly payment of wages cannot solve the whole question. It can be aptly said that a proportional and scientific expenditure is in a way the crux of the whole labour problem. Says Dr. Marshall † :—

* Standing Order No. 12, as presented by the Bombay Mill-owners' Association, to the Joint Strike Committee at Bombay on the 4th October, 1928, runs thus :—

"Before the beginning of each month, a notice will be posted outside the time-keeper's office and in the mill stating (*a*) the days on which the mill will be closed on the following month, and (*b*) the date or dates on which wages will be paid.

"The Strike Committee say the rule must provide that the wages will be paid before the 8th day of each month. The Mill-owners' Association object that it is ordinarily impracticable to pay the wages so early; sometimes it is done, so as to make payments before a holiday, such as Divali; but extra clerks have to be employed and worked late at night in order to prepare the wage-roll in time . . . . There are undoubtedly good arguments to be urged in support of the proposal that monthly wages should ordinarily be paid within a week of the close of the month for which they are due . . . ."

Report of the Bombay Strike Enquiry Committee, 1928-29 (Bombay, 1929), Vol. I, page 32.

† Marshall : Principles of Economics—London, 1922, Vol. I, Book VI, Chapter XIII, page 689.

"A rise in the standard of life implies an intelligence and energy and self-respect, leading to more care and judgment in expenditure, and to an avoidance of food and drink that gratify the appetite but afford no strength and of ways of living that are unwholesome physically and morally. A rise in the standard of life for the whole population will much increase the national dividend and the share of it which accrues to each grade and to each trade."

The difficulties of our labourers necessitate the appointment of a Welfare Werker. The last few years have shown that there is something essentially wrong with industry. Large-scale production, it is true, has advantages of its own. Its main drawback lies in the fact that the individual worker is now far removed from the employer and that his interests are thereby apt to be overlooked. The employers in the western world have, of late, directed their attention to the human factor in industry. It has been recognised that the factory and factory-workers are inseparably connected with each other, and that any improvement in the latter leads to a more or less proportional improvement in the former. Welfare schemes have done an invaluable service to labourers in England, and it is believed that they will grow from more to more.

"Welfare work consists of voluntary efforts on the part of employers to improve, within the existing industrial system, the conditions of employment in their own factories." * Industry has an obligation to discharge towards the workers. This idea has taken a firm grip on the Western employers and is now making a steady headway. The War of 1914 greatly accelerated the welfare movement in England, and it now stands as an integral part of the industrial organisation. Again, the Workers' Revolution in Russia has set the employers of Europe thinking about placating labour, and whereas formerly it was a benevolent and charitable act, it is now looked upon as a duty.

The Welfare Worker holds an important position. "He is usually responsible for seeing that workers are placed in jobs for which they are physically and temperamentally fitted, and that they have opportunities for training and development of initiative. He may be responsible for seeing that all legal

* E. D. Proud: Welfare Work, London, 1926, page 5.

requirements regarding employment are carried out, for co-operating with the Factory Certifying Surgeon with regard to the medical examination of young workers and for seeing that the working conditions and general environments are as good as the firm can afford to make them. He is consequently responsible for first aid, canteen and cloakroom arrangements, and often has a great share in promoting facilities for education and recreation." *

The question now arises, how far have our factory-owners tried to imitate their brethren of the West in this policy. I must plainly admit that an overwhelmingly large majority of them have very little to their credit. Welfare work of an extremely elementary nature has no doubt been started in several factories. Even there, it is looked upon not as a duty but as a benevolent measure, pure and simple, and that also of an eyewash character.

There are very few factories which try to promote the educative and recreative tendencies of workers. Medicines are freely distributed in some mills. But this alone does not constitute welfare-work. Besides these, there is the creation of harmony, the co-operation of management and workers in industry. This appears through the works committee, where representatives of employers and employees meet together for the discussion of common aims and objects.

The mill-owner reigns. He often treats the factory-workers as his private servants and extracts extra work from them. He sometimes assumes the role of a dictator, and uses abusive and filthy language to them. Let me point out that we cannot achieve a solid and substantial success in industry unless and until the worker extends his goodwill to the master. And, here, patience is required. Evil conditions of the past and present have bred suspicion and distrust amongst mill-hands, and these will take a long time to disappear. Still, genuine and disinterested attempts are sure to bear fruit sooner or later. Will the mill-owners wake up before it is too late?

A Welfare Worker, to repeat once again, is an extremely necessary adjunct of a wise and successful industrial organism.

* Welfare Work in Industry, Edited by E. T. Kelly; London, 1925, pages 7 and 8.

A large factory can procure his services all for itself. Smaller factories, situated in a particular area, may combine together for the purpose.

Welfare work can safely proceed on the following lines :—

(1) *Canteens.*—Our workers, if alone, prepare their own meals or board with others as in Bombay. Otherwise, it is the wife or any other female member who cooks the workman's food. A few crumbs of dry bread (if available) constitute our worker's breakfast. The food prepared in the morning is usually carried to the mills, where it is taken at the mid-day interval in some corner. It generally consists of loaves of bread or boiled rice which are supplemented, if possible, with cooked vegetables or meat.

Mess-rooms exist nowhere. When the mid-day syren is sounded, the operatives are seen taking their meals here, there and everywhere. Some flock under the shade of a tree, while others squat in the corridors or stairs. Others still are found having their meals near their place of work.

In some big factories, the workers are turned out into the open at the mid-day interval. They generally go to their quarters if they have any, or pass the time under shady trees. Their condition is pitiable in the rainy season. They run about from place to place for shelter, till the interval is over.

In general, there is usually no shed for the workers for taking their meals in. Is it not necessary that a canteen should be started in every decent factory and cooked food supplied to workers at cost-price? This will be very economical for them and is sure to prove popular. It is said that caste-prejudices stand in their way. This may be true amongst the Hindus, but the objection is not so great as to debar the possibility of an experiment. If canteens for Hindus and Muslims separately are started, they will indeed prove useful. Care must be taken that canteens are comfortable and well-ventilated. They should be made as cool as possible in the summer season.

Having been deeply sunk in poverty and drudging along in this condition for a long time past, the workers have almost no idea of the elementary rules of sanitation. Their habits are not clean. They look very rude and rough, though they carry

a kind and charitable heart within. It is necessary that instruction in rules of health, diet and sanitation should be imparted to them. This will prove highly useful.

Employers should interest themselves in, and give financial aid to, any social agencies which may crop up for the uplift of labouring classes. The worker should be taught to regard himself as a member of a respectable body. He should be instructed to have more self-respect. Any attempt made in this direction will surely benefit the master as well as the worker.

(2) *Cleanliness.*—As I shall show later, smaller mills are never properly whitewashed: some of them appear to have been whitewashed ages ago. The floors are invariably unclean. Some of them are not even cemented. A great deal of dust accumulates on walls and in passages.

The workers themselves look listless. Their clothes are generally dirty and, in summer days, foul-smelling. This, combined with a large number of unclean factories, leaves a depressing effect on the workers. Cleanliness in itself is healthy, and any improvement in this direction is sure to be amply rewarded.

(3) *Regular medical examination through physicians and dentists.*—Some organised firms have physicians, whole-time or part-time, attached to them, but a thorough medical examination of workers has nowhere been undertaken so far. Moreover, there is not even a single factory which has a dentist for the benefit of the workers. Neither has the Government realised this necessity. Doctors, I must repeat, are a sheer necessity, and workers must be regularly examined by them.

"First Aid to the Injured" classes may also be started in different factories through enlisting the help and co-operation of the Red Cross Society. Accidents in modern industry are inevitable, and the rough handling of wounded men by untrained hands can better be imagined than described. In my opinion arrangements for the antiseptic dressing of wounds should be made compulsory on factory-owners, as it is found that slight injuries grow dangerous when unattended to. Accidents in India are alarmingly high, yet there are not many factories which have provision for first-aid.

(4) Now-a-days, workers are recruited haphazard. There is no judicious selection. This is one of the many reasons

which account for the ever-shifting tendencies of our labourers "Much of the tragedy in the life of the worker has been connected with the casual way of entering the factory which has been in vogue and the careless apportionment of the work, when once engaged."* Welfare work can surely aim at a wise selection of workers and avoid the unnecessary waste which goes on in the factories at present.

The mill-owner takes things easy. It is no doubt true that the workers are illiterate. Still, a certain amount of interest can be created in them by a regular course of lectures, and the new wireless broadcasting can help them immensely. The average labourer does not know anything at present about the condition of the industry he is engaged in. He is in fact ignorant of everything except his own little process that goes to maintain the members of his family. Lectures can surely awaken him from his torpor. They should be so arranged as to give him the chance of understanding the whole mechanism of his factory from beginning to end. The geography of the factory, the manufacture of the product, its marketing abroad and all other problems, directly or indirectly bearing on it, should be explained and illustrated by lantern slides.

Also, sufficient records should be kept of the name, home-address, date of birth, date of appointment, trade-union membership, etc, of the different labourers. Again, their efficiency and progress, their absence and causes thereof should also be regularly noted.

These are some of the duties which may safely be taken up by the Welfare Worker. It must be remembered that his success depends mainly on the co-operation which he receives from the mill-owner. But it is also dependent upon his personal qualifications. The Welfare Worker must be highly paid. He must possess a staunch character, a keen sense of justice and a sound sense of proportion. He must also be good-tempered—a quality which will mainly count towards his success in his work.

The Supply of and Demand for Labour

There is a general complaint of the shortage of labour in several industrial centres in India.† This statement is quite

* *Vide* Kelly and Haskins: Pamphlet on Foundations of Industrial Welfare.

† J. H. Kelman: Labour in India (London, 1923), page 118:—

"The fact that there is seldom an adequate supply of labour for modern

unwarranted. The employers sometimes want to engage men at the pre-War rates of wages, regardless of the fact that the prices of articles have gone up since 1914 and made it difficult for the workers to make both ends meet.* Wages generally rise in sympathy with the rise of prices and any attempt to evade this tendency must drive the labourers to other fields making the number of those available for employment seemingly low. I cannot help here alluding to an incident in a mill at Lahore (Punjab) in 1920 of which I was an eye-witness. It was about the middle of June in that year that I visited the factory as an Industrial Investigator. As soon as some of the workmen realised my sympathetic attitude, they came weeping and said that the manager was trying to deceive them by giving low wages, as compared with those previously agreed upon. The manager admitted that he had been instructed by the proprietor to reduce wages below the agreed amount.

This is something very novel indeed and displays the high-handedness of employers in their treatment of the employees.†

industry and the further fact that there are many reasons which tempt those employed in it to leave it . . . have made this habit of deferred payment almost universal . . . .''

Also see Punjab Census Report, 1921, Vol. I, page 369.

In an article on 'Labour Records in Factories,' published in the Journal of Indian Industries and Labour, Miss Broughton (now Lady Chatterjee) remarks :—"In India, the scarcity of labour makes selection still more difficult."

* "Even in Bombay to-day, with all these recruiting grounds at Ratnagiri and other places, what we find is that there is no scarcity of labour to speak of. We are always looking out in Bombay here and there and everywhere for an adequate supply of labour and we do not find any difficulty in obtaining it, with increased wages and other privileges." Remarks of Sir D. Wacha on the Washington Draft Convention regarding unemployment on the 21st February, 1921. See Debates of the Council of State for the year 1921, page 168. Sir Thomas Holland, once speaking at Madras, observed :—". . . . . in India we have means of obtaining all the expert labour that is necessary." Quoted by J. P. Srivastava in his article on 'Labour supply from districts near Allahabad' in the Indian Journal of Economics, November, 1919, page 677.

† Report of the Indian Factory Labour Commission, 1908, Vol. I, London, 1908, page 20.

"The Indian operative is fond of change; he prefers to wander from mill to mill rather than remain settled; and the slightest causes are apparently sufficient to determine him to leave one employer in favour of another. We have seen operatives who have travelled from one industry . . . ."

This statement does not fit in even with the present conditions of India. The labourer suffers indignity at the hands of his master, and the slightest

On these occasions the employees find it out too late sometimes to go elsewhere. Their information regarding market conditions of labour is very vague and indefinite, and it is difficult to take a risk, especially when, with their elastic standard of living, they can accommodate themselves to their changed circumstances. Thus it dawns on us that the fact of workmen not being readily available at the old rates of wages cannot be taken to indicate scarcity of labour-supply. The inter-provincial migration of labourers and their emigration to other countries is a contradiction in point. Sometimes, factory-owners are in league with one another * and make the world hard for the labourers to live in. During my visit to a mill at Amritsar in May, 1927, the manager confessed that he never took in a labourer who had been dismissed by another similar factory situated at a distance of about 40 miles. These two factories are the only ones that produce the same commodity in the Punjab. It is, therefore, difficult for a dismissed and undesirable worker to make both ends meet, unless of course he decides to take to a different calling altogether at a greatly reduced wage.

This is one of the many instances that I have personally witnessed. In a mill at Lahore in 1927, I found the women workers sorting wool under the unbearable summer sun. There was no shed provided for the purpose, and the poor women, inarticulate as they are, had to seek a temporary and farcical shelter from the sun by taking off their head-gear and spreading it over their heads with the help of stray sticks. Not only that. The factory-owner, who, with his beard and all, appeared holy and pious came down upon some workers with the roar of a lion and abused them mercilessly. It was a clear case of defamation. The women felt it, but they must tolerate

causes indeed do not make him shift from place to place. He likes a settled life, but feels disappointed wherever he goes. It is the factory-owner who is partly responsible for the so-called shifting attitude of the labourer and not the labourer himself.

* Extract from a speech by Sir D. Wacha in the Council of State (1922):—

" Sometimes there are badmashes of operatives in one mill who want to go to another mill, but there is a long-standing agreement among the cotton mills to the effect that operatives who behave badly, or disloyally, or seditiously in one mill should not be employed by another mill. It is a measure of self-protection. That is the reason why the turbulent and dismissed, who are known to be at the bottom of strikes or other mischief, do not find employment "—(Council of State's Debates for 1921, page 168).

it, as they have to keep themselves going.* An Indian Director of Industries related a case to me in May, 1927. A labourer was mercilessly beaten by his master in 1926. He came to the Director who, of course, declared his helplessness to assist him in his official capacity. He had, however, a friendly talk over the affair with the master concerned, and persuaded him to pay one hundred rupees as compensation to the injured worker. These are some of the causes which reduce the supply of labour in our factories. Moreover, the housing condition of our workers is extremely unsatisfactory. They are herded together like sheep in dark and insanitary tenements. Moreover, their standard of living is elastic and low, and they prefer an independent living, however meagre, to the dull, monotonous, hard and tiring life in factories. They choose the path of least resistance and are sometimes prepared to live on alms as free beggars rather than go to factories as servile workers.

But the so-called scarcity of labour is also due to the fact that the employers are not sometimes aware of suitable places for the recruitment of their men. Many of them have no permanent organisation to supply and control labour. Organised recruitment does not generally exist and labour-force † can be

* Report of the Indian Factory Labour Commission, 1908, Vol. I, London, 1908, page 19.

"The position of the operative has been greatly strengthened by the fact that the supply of factory labour undoubtedly is, and has been, inadequate; and there is, and has been, the keenest competition among employers to secure a full labour supply. These two main causes, the independence of the Indian labourer owing to the fact that he possesses other and congenial means of livelihood, and the deficient labour supply, govern the whole situation."

I take strong exception to these remarks of the Indian Factory Labour Commission of 1907-08. Labourers, then, did not sleep in a bed of roses. They worked excessively long hours. They suffered insults patiently. Why? This was because they were not united and had very few alternative "congenial means of earning a livelihood." Only those conversant with Indian conditions realise the sufferings of the poor. Thus, it is clear that the labourers do not command an independent position.

Regarding deficient labour supply, I have given definite proofs in this chapter to contradict the above point. I have shown that there is a great potential supply of labour even at present, when the country is more industrialised than it was in 1907.

† See Indian Journal of Economics for November, 1919, Vol. II, part 4, serial no. 8, pages 676 to 688, article on 'Labour supply from Allahabad and adjoining districts' by J. P. Srivastava :—

". . . . If we examine the matter from the supply point of view taking into

greatly increased, if illustrated advertisements were published, and if effective means of broadcasting news of wages, factory conditions and other relevant things were adopted. Even under the present circumstances, there is a distinct migration of labour. The following table * forms an interesting study :—

Province or Agency	Number per 10,000 population	
	Born in district where enumerated	Born elsewhere
India	9,019	981
Bihar and Orissa	9,575	425
Madras	9,349	651
United Provinces	9,310	690
Bengal	9,233	767
N. W. F. Province	8,969	1,031
Baluchistan	8,937	1,063
C. P. & Berar	8,851	1,149
Burma	8,824	1,176
Bombay	8,689	1,311
Punjab	8,563	1,437
Assam	8,234	1,766
Coorg	7,929	2,071

It is clear that, for the whole of India, 981 persons per every 10,000 were born elsewhere than in the district of enumeration during the census of 1921. From amongst the larger provinces, Assam contains the highest percentage of foreigners. In the census of 1921, over 16 per cent of her population (i.e. about $1\frac{1}{4}$ millions persons) were returned as born outside the province. And, again, among these, less than a third were born in districts adjacent to the province. Assam provides two main sources of attraction for the foreigners ; the cultivable waste and the tea-garden industry. The latter draws foreign labourers from Bihar and Orissa, the Central Provinces, the United Provinces and Madras, while the former is dependent upon Eastern Bengal.

consideration all the factors which affect the mobility of labour, we would find that India contains a very large supply of untrained but trainable labour from which to recruit for the ranks of the semi-skilled workmen who are employed in considerable number by mills, factories and collieries."

* Census of India, Vol. I, page 83.

According to the census of 1921, Bengal received more than 1,900,000 immigrants and sent out about 700,000 emigrants, thereby recording a favourable balance of over a million. Her foreign-born population forms about 4 per cent of the total population and, of this, a larger number comes from distant places—66 per cent of the immigrants came from Bihar and Orissa, 18 per cent from the United Provinces, 5 per cent from Nepal, 4 per cent from Assam and the remaining from other areas.

Forty-one persons per every 1,000 enumerated for census purposes in the Bombay Presidency came from outside; of these 39 per mille were born in other parts of India and 2 per mille outside India. Writing on the subject of migration, Mr. Sedgwick says:—

"There are thus two chief streams of immigrants which reach us, one from north-west India represented by the huge area of Baluchistan, the North-Western Frontier Province, the Punjab, the United Provinces and Rajputana and the other coming from the south-east from Hyderabad and Madras. So far as there is any outward stream, it is in a direction moving towards the north-east into Central India and beyond into Bengal and even to Burma, with a second slighter southern movement into Mysore. But it is believed that, while the two streams of emigration are in the nature of casual seasonal labour into cotton lands and the like (though of this there is little actual evidence), the two streams of immigration represent persons in search of work in the cities. The stream from the north goes to swell the proletariat of Bombay and Karachi; and the Hyderabad stream goes to the mills at Sholapur . . . ."

Similar streams of inter-provincial emigration and immigration continue in other provinces. The figures of emigration to other countries are incomplete. As the census report for India, 1921 (page 97) says:—"Nothing is known of the movements across the borders of India into China, Nepal, Afghanistan and Persia; and, though the larger part of this movement is casual, it cannot be said to be inconsiderable. Similarly, there is no record available of the emigrants to Nepal or Bhutan from Bengal and the United Provinces. . . . . . Nor are any reliable data forthcoming of the considerable movement which must take place from Burma into China and Siam. . ." The statement

given below shows the number of Indian emigrants to certain colonies :—

Ceylon	461,000
Straits Settlements and Malaya ...	401,000
Natal	47,000
Trinidad	37,000
Fiji	33,000
Mauritius	17,000
Kenya	17,000

These figures relate to the Indians in general, and no separate records are forthcoming in respect of factory population. It is nevertheless true that they try to make use of favourable opportunities, if circumstances and conditions allow. The pressure of population on the soil has led to the migration of agricultural classes to industrial areas in different parts of India. The labourers from the United Provinces go to Calcutta, Assam, Bombay, etc. The competition of machine-made cloth has dealt a serious blow to the hand-loom industry, and forced the hereditary weavers to shift to the cotton mills. The "Pardeshi Bhayi," so often heard of in Bombay, is a Hindu from the United Provinces. The Punjab sends out skilled craftsmen and weavers, and the North-Western Frontier province the ubiquitous Pathan money-lender. Writing on "Labour supply from Allahabad and adjoining districts," Mr. Srivastava* says :—

"The labourers in Allahabad and its five adjoining districts are sufficiently mobile. Large number of labourers from Allahabad proceed to east as far as Calcutta and the adjacent districts of 24 parganas, the other labour centres of Bengal and Central Provinces, and overseas. At all times, an appreciable proportion of the population is absent in search of employment far afield."

There is a great potential supply of labour in India. The census figures for 1921 show that there are 3,021,000 beggars and prostitutes in India. These people throng the cities and extort money from others by various devices. The beggars number 9,332 in Calcutta and 6,601 in Bombay. Their utilisation in factories would add immensely to the productive powers

*Indian Journal of Economics, November, 1919, pages 682 and 683.

of the country. In addition to beggars, we have a large number of sadhus, purohits, mahants, mullas, majawirs and others who are reckoned as religious devotees and who generally live on public charity.

The criminal tribes also form a large class by themselves. They lead an unsettled life and are a menace to the peace and security of the country. The Local Governments have of late begun the humane policy of the reclamation of these tribes, which is expected to prove fruitful in the long run. Appreciable results have been attained already. But much remains to be done. These gangs still pass at pleasure from district to district, oftentimes leaving a trail of undetected crime behind. It is essential that sufficient restrictive settlements should be provided for these criminals, until they have learnt to lead a quiet, reformed and settled life. They would thereby be able to become useful members of society and add greatly to the serviceable labour-force of the country.

The existence in trade of a large number of middle-men, whose functions could easily be discharged by a smaller number, provides another possible source of labour-supply for our growing industries. This profession is very overcrowded. It comprises 57.3 per mille of the population. The protective policy, adopted by the Government of India, has given much satisfaction to those living on bare subsistence and has held out to them hopes of absorption in other walks of life. Of persons living on trade, the money-lenders, the bankers, the brokers, the commission agents and others form a large portion by themselves. Such being the case, we have another avenue for recruitment to our industrial force. Again, small shops that exist at present in our towns are uneconomical. They entail much waste of labour and time, and a great amount of potential labour would be set free, if they were replaced by large stores.

Enough has been written on the different sources from which labour could be drawn for the steady industrialisation of the country. There are further avenues which could be safely tapped with advantage. The provincial departments of agriculture have of late evinced some interest in the improvement of cultivation. The Royal Commission on Agriculture has collected a valuable mass of evidence on the subject of Indian agriculture,

and it is hoped that their report will be of immense use to us. The improvement of agriculture,* which is now sure to come about very soon, will set free a large number of workers for employment in factories. Moreover, the Workmen's Compensation Act which has lately been put into force will exercise a healthy influence. It will create a certain amount of security for the workmen. The knowledge, that they will be adequately protected in their hour of trouble, will surely prove attractive to those in search of employment.

A word about the educated community. The unemployment problem stares them in the face, and their position of late has become very precarious. It is said that the educated people of to-day shun manual labour and are averse to factory work. This is true to some extent, but their aversion is based on sound reasoning. They are prepared to take to an honourable livelihood, but they hate a life of wretched and miserable dependence. Even under the present conditions, a large number of them are anxious for employment and are not given a fair trial by employers. The latter know that the educated people cannot stick to unwholesome conditions, and are sure to raise a hue and cry against the unnatural state of affairs created by mean selfishness and conservatism. They do not want the labourers to unite, and it is against their immediate financial interests to accommodate the already discontented but educated community.

Enough has been said to prove that there is a great potential supply of labour in India. One serious allegation is levelled against the labourers: it is said that their whole life is regulated by caste. Let us look at this point minutely.

The institution of caste possesses a great historical importance, but conditions have undergone a great change. Now-a-days, caste turns largely on occupations, and its old rigidity

* Calvert: Wealth and Welfare in the Punjab—Lahore, 1922—page 171:—

". . . . it is clear that a large amount of labour could be spared from the fields, if those remaining could be induced to put forth greater exertion, and this can, probably, best be effected by insuring them a full and adequate return undiminished by the exorbitant demand of the usurer."

Indian Fiscal Commission—Minutes of Evidence—Vol. I, Calcutta, 1923, page 132. The Honourable Mr. Harkishan Lal said before the Indian Fiscal Commission:—"The numbers are so great in agriculture and the number required for industries would be so small compared to the population that I cannot conceive a stage, when agriculture would be affected by industrial growth."

lingers no longer. It is, as may be aptly said, in the melting pot. Under the stress of foreign competition and the import of new and renovating ideas, the hard and fast rules of caste, which previously distributed and locked up the whole population into cast-iron compartments, no longer hold their original sway. And now, it is amongst the higher people that a greater or lesser rigidity of caste still persists. Caste is malleable amongst the lower classes. Mr. Middleton, Superintendent of the census operations in the Punjab for 1921, lays the whole blame of the so-called rigidity of caste on the Government. He thus expresses himself *:—

". . . . . I had intended pointing out that there is a very wide revolt against the classification of occupational castes, that these castes have been largely manufactured and almost entirely preserved as separate castes by the British Government. Our land records and official documents have added iron bands to the old rigidity of caste. Caste in itself was rigid amongst the higher castes, but malleable amongst the lower ; we pigeon-holed every one by castes and, if we could not find a true caste for them, labelled them with the name of an hereditary occupation. We deplore the caste-system and its effect on social and economic problems, but we are largely responsible for the system that we deplore. Left to themselves, such castes as Sunar, Tarkhan and Lohar would rapidly disappear and no one would suffer. The large number of people, who have refused to record any caste at this census, is a sign of progress and the breakage of customary bonds ; it is no reflection on the administration of the census." †

It is said that caste tendencies have restricted the active freedom of labour. It is no doubt true that the illiteracy of the people, their poverty and disorganisation, their abysmal ignorance of external affairs, their family affection and love of home have rendered their position very precarious, and prevented them from making a full use of their opportunities. But, allowing for these drawbacks, we find a great mobility from one place to

* Punjab Census Report, 1921, Vol. I, page 343.

† "As an institution, caste plays a far less important part in the social life of the people than in other parts of India." Imperial Gazetteer of India ; Punjab, Vol I. Calcutta, 1908. Provincial series, page 48.

another. Some statistics have already been given in support of this fact. The following figures, which were collected by me in 1920, will strengthen the point still further :—

No.	Name of the Factory	Total no. of workers	Punjabis	Total no. of residents of the district where factory was located	No. of those belonging to other provinces
1	Mela Ram Cotton Mills, Lahore	317	81	45	236
2	Colony Flour Mills, Lyallpur	52	24	...	28
3	Gayan Mills, Lyallpur ...	47	26	...	21
4	Rustomji Mills, Badami Bagh	81	37	18	44

Of 695 workers in a mill at Amritsar in May, 1927, only 70 belonged to the Punjab. The Punjabi wants more wages and dislikes the trying conditions of cotton mills. These figures show that there is a distinct mobility of labour from district to district, and even province to province. The carpet factories at Amritsar, Sujanpore and Batala attract labour from the adjoining areas while the Dhariwal woollen mills are mainly dependent on labour drawn from the neighbouring hills. * Similar is the case with other Indian factories, especially at Bombay, Ahmedabad and Calcutta, where labourers are drawn from far and near. In his 'Labour and Housing in Bombay,' Mr. Burnett Hurst writes † :—

* I would here like to mention that no registers, showing the native places of workmen, are kept by the proprietors. It is thus extremely difficult and troublesome to prepare such tables, as every operative has to be approached personally for this purpose. It took me a long time to collect the necessary figures.

† Page 45.

"Little over 10 per cent of the mill-hands are city born, the remainder come from up-country. The districts and provinces which supply Bombay with most of her textile labour are Ratnagiri (41 per cent), the United Provinces (11 per cent), Satara (8 per cent), Poona (7 per cent), Kolaba (5 per cent). Those, who come from the Konkan and Deccan, are chiefly Marathas and Kunbirs, although there are a considerable number of Mahars, Dheds, Chambhars and Mochis—men of low caste. The 'Pardeshi' from the United Provinces (some 500 miles away) is usually a Rajput, Thakur or Ahir . . . ."

The movement of progressive societies is from status to contract, and has been followed by an increase in the mobility of labour. This is further apparent from some of the provincial statistics given below :—

* Table showing the Birth-place of Skilled and Unskilled Workers Employed in the Bengal Province

WORKERS	TOTAL	BORN IN PROVINCE			BORN IN OTHER PROVINCES							BORN OUTSIDE INDIA
		Enumerated Districts	Adjoining Districts	Other Districts	North Bihar	South Bihar	Chota Nagpur	Orissa	United Provinces	Madras	Other parts of India	Not in India
Skilled:												
Numbers	181,974	51,151	13,429	6,560	27,120	24,779	2,427	12,524	35,991	4,180	3,225	588
Percentage ...	...	28.1	7.3	3.5	14.9	13.6	1.3	6.9	19.8	2.3	1.8	.3
Unskilled:												
Numbers	588,448	135,669	21,725	16,945	36,099	63,977	122,942	51,766	68,154	13,294	57,535	342
Percentage ...	...	23.1	3.7	2.9	6.1	10.9	20.8	8.8	11.5	2.3	9.8	.1

* Census of India, 1921, Bengal, Vol. V, Part II, Industrial Statistics Table XXII, Parts IV and V.

*** Table showing the Birth-place of Skilled and Unskilled Workers Employed in the Province of Bombay**

WORKERS		TOTAL	BORN IN PROVINCE			BORN IN OTHER PROVINCES					BORN OUTSIDE INDIA
			District of enumeration	Contiguous Districts	Other Districts	Baroda	Mysore	Hyderabad	C. P. and Berar	Rest of India	Not in India
Skilled :											
Numbers	...	154,871	37,451	17,432	73,245	5,210	204	3,467	2,012	15,307	543
Percentage	...	...	24.2	11.2	27.3	3.4	.1	2.2	1.3	9.9	.4
Unskilled :											
Numbers		177,615	46,969	18,270	82,932	5,578	82	2,797	2,155	18,744	88
Percentage	...	...	26.4	10.3	46.7	3.1	...	1.6	1.2	10.5	...

* Census of India, 1921, Vol. VIII, Bombay Presidency, Part II, Table XXII, Parts IV and V, pages 404 and 426.

* Table showing the Birth-place of Skilled and Unskilled Workers Employed in Bihar and Orissa

INDUSTRY	WORKERS	Numbers employed	BORN IN BIHAR AND ORISSA: District of enumeration	BORN IN BIHAR AND ORISSA: Contiguous district	BORN IN BIHAR AND ORISSA: Other districts	BORN IN OTHER PROVINCES: Bengal: Contiguous to Bihar and Orissa	Bengal: Other districts	United Provinces: Districts contiguous to Bihar and Orissa	United Provinces: Other districts	Central Provinces: Districts contiguous to Bihar and Orissa	Central Provinces: Other districts	Madras	Punjab	Bombay	Other provinces and States	Outside India
Coal mines ...	Skilled ...	38,958	19,132	9,086	6,277	692	346	236	745	402	1,597	25	140	189	77	15
	Percentage ...	...	88.5			...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Unskilled ...	60,714	28,191	11,720	13,358	880	149	285	771	1,729	2,831	17	339	165	259	20
	Percentage ...	...	87.7			...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Iron and Steel works	Skilled ...	9,229	1,184	271	2 653	164	786	154	1,158	439	281	631	427	684	244	153
	Percentage ...	...	44.5			10.2		14.2		...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Unskilled ..	14,594	6,870	1,105	1,299	123	55	39	201	3,044	1,020	414	29	263	131	1
	Percentage ...	...	63.5			...	...	...	...	27.8		...	...	...	...	...

* Census of India, 1921, Vol. VII, Bihar and Orissa, Table XXII, Parts IV and V.

CHAPTER VI

CONDITIONS WITHIN FACTORIES

THE actual conditions prevalent in Indian factories open up an interesting subject for study. We have seen how the indifference of the Government, coupled with several other disabilities, brought about the decay of Indian industries. But it was not long before the conditions took a different turn. The capitalistic system found its way into Jute and Cotton, though the pioneer attempts made in this direction were not very fruitful. The Great War of 1914 held out high hopes for India, but the people were ill-prepared for it. Trade remained slack till 1916, when conditions took a favourable turn. The War necessitated an increase of manufactured goods incidental thereto. The textile mills worked at their greatest capacity. Shell-making and other munition works increased the number of factory labourers. The statement, which appears below, shows the total number of registered factories from 1892 to 1925. The increase is partly due to the industrial advancement of India and partly to the gradual extension of the Factory Act.

Year	Number	Year	Number
1892	656	1909	2,243
1893	715	1910	2,355
1894	815	1911	2,403
1895	872	1912	2,710
1896	937	1913	2,868
1897	1,008	1914	2,936
1898	1,098	1915	3,027
1899	1,151	1916	3,274
1900	1,227	1917	3,382
1901	1,398	1918	3,436
1902	1,533	1919	3,604
1903	1,673	1920	3,804
1904	1,485	1921	4,059
1905	1,600	1922	5,144
1906	1,855	1923	5,985
1907	1,976	1924	6,406
1908	2,120	1925	6,926

The capitalistic system of industry has brought about complexities of its own, and it is curious to see how factories differ from factories. There are factories which look like "boxes built round a crowded heap of machinery"* and factories which are most up-to-date in their construction and design.

Sanitary Conditions

The increase in the number and size of registered factories has given rise to several acute problems. Under the factory rules, all inside walls and ceilings of rooms, passages and staircases are required to be lime-washed at least once a year. Annual lime-washing was very half-heartedly taken up by mill-owners at the start. Perennial factories, employing 50 persons or more, generally show a satisfactory advance in this direction. Smaller factories lag behind; nay, they violate the law as far as possible. My experience shows that many of them have not been lime-washed for several years. The iron foundries in the Punjab are a case in point. Seasonal factories have little regard for the law. Their condition is extremely unsatisfactory, and some of them do not show even a pretence of white-wash.

Rubbish and debris generally accumulate in the premises of factories, large and small, and very little is done to remove them. This is especially true of several ginning mills, oil mills and iron foundries. The cleaning of floors in small factories is generally overlooked, and the place set apart for drinking water is not kept in a well-drained condition. Drains carrying waste or sewage water sometimes are not constructed with impermeable material. They are not regularly flushed or connected with the main drainage of the town. This defect is conspicuous in some of the smaller mills. Latrine accommodation is not always sufficient. Neither is it hygienic. The floors are not always cemented, and waste-water very often is not led away to the main drains. It is at times allowed to stagnate and produce a stinking smell and sickening effect all round. In some factories, latrines are not often cleaned. Again, worn-out pans are not regularly replaced. According to the factory rules, the following scale has been laid down: this scale was also

*J. H. Kelman: Labour in India, page 126.

recommended by the Indian Factory Labour Commission of 1907 :—

	Seats
Where the number of operatives does not exceed 50.	3
Where the operatives are more than 50 and do not exceed 150	4
Where the number of operatives exceeds 150 but does not exceed 250	5
Where the number of operatives exceeds 250 : one seat for every 50 or fraction of fifty.	

I believe that this scale does not work satisfactorily. It has been several times observed that all latrines are occupied at a time when a number of persons are waiting outside. I have consulted some medical men on this point, and have come to the conclusion that the standard of one seat for every thirty persons is a necessary minimum. Separate urinals and latrines screened off from those for males and at a reasonable distance from them should be set apart for women-workers.

Proper conservancy is necessary in latrines. Putrefaction sets in very early in the summer and the rainy season, and a vigilant attention to hygienic and sanitary principles becomes all the more necessary at such times. I suggest that the duties of municipal sanitary inspectors should be extended in this direction. They should be placed in part under the factory inspectors and called upon to inspect factories with a view to suggest and enforce elementary rules of sanitation.

A plentiful supply of good drinking water is a necessity. It is inordinately hot in summer, and there are not many mills which keep a supply of cool water. In a large number of cases, the water-tap is fixed in an open space where the scorching heat of summer does its work: the tap-water is lukewarm. Tap-water is not available in some areas. It is there that the main trouble arises. A well is dug, but its water is not periodically examined. Moreover, small pools of dirty water collect round the brick-work and its continual trickling down pollutes the well-water. Where it is not possible to supply tap-water or where the public water-supply is intermittent, factory rules enjoin a storage of drinking water at the scale of one gallon per head. My visits to different factories have convinced me of the insufficiency of this supply. I have consulted some experienced

medical men on this point and have been told that, under the above conditions, every factory should begin its work with a storage of water at the scale of two gallons per head every day.

Ventilation

It had long been thought that a moderately dry temperature and a regular supply of fresh air are all that is necessary for the health and comfort of workers. This conviction led to the belief that any change for purposes of ventilation should not be made without their consent. "The fact that the homes are far more close than the mills, the obvious dislike of the workers to open windows and their fear, lest currents of air will break cotton threads, are all quoted as proof that there is no need for change."* But it has been established that fresh air, to be effective, must be "in motion and induce changes in the temperature of the body."† It has also been proved that "there is a definite and ascertainable ratio between the condition of the air and the efficiency of the worker who breathes it." Good ventilation leads to efficiency and experiments ‡ so far made in India go to show how work done in a well-ventilated mill differs to some extent from that performed in an ill-ventilated mill. It is difficult to work in the still air of June, July and August, but the same task can be facilitated under a fan. It is therefore necessary that fans should be installed wherever possible. "There are, however, compromises that can be made, and here and there these are found in operation. Metal plates attached

* Kelman: Labour in India, page 128.

† Ibid., page 129.

‡ "In a Local Government factory engaged in fine precision work and gauge manufacture, the installation of fans has proved a great advantage, both in the activity of the men and the cleanliness and accuracy of their work.

"All things considered, the least that can be done, where possible, is to provide a ventilating or ceiling fan installation producing the necessary change of air to stimulate the action of the skin and give such relief from the close, humid, perspiration-evoking atmosphere of the usual Bengal factory as is possible. Where dust operations are involved, such as bark-grinding in tanneries, emery and stone grinding, or crushing operations, an exhaust dust-removing attachment is essential, and the necessary provision for this should be made in the specification of the machinery."

Article on Factory Construction and Installation in Bengal by A. T. Weston, Deputy Director of Industries, Bengal, published in Bulletins of Indian industries and labour series issued by the Government of India in 1921, page 27.

to overhead shafting and moving with the revolution of the shaft cost little. Broad canvas sheets, so hung that they swing free, may be placed on overhead bars with little addition to the mechanical structure. Circular metal fans also worked from the central engine can be erected in places where the atmosphere is specially stagnant." Such experiments are in operation, and their universal adoption will lead to better results.

The Cotton ginning factories * present another distressing problem. The atmosphere in these is dust-laden and affects the health of labourers adversely. Cotton ginners can be easily recognised from a host of other workers by their unhealthy appearance. They are expected to be busy at their work for at least ten hours (very much more in some cases) and, after they come out of the factory, they are almost speechless. The dusty atmosphere affects their eyes and throat and lowers their vitality. Very many workers earn their livelihood in ginning factories, and an overwhelmingly large number of them are women and young children. My enquiries show that consumption is greatly prevalent amongst them due, no doubt, to unhygienic conditions of work.

The Majority Commissioners of the Indian Factory Commission of 1907 were not unfavourably impressed with the then existing system of ventilation in factories. They believed that ventilation was excellent except in cotton textile factories. I am afraid this remark could not have been safely made as early as 1907. The condition of factories is still far from satisfactory, least so in textile and ginning mills. The Inspector of Factories, Punjab, thus expresses himself in his Annual Report for 1914: (page 4) :—

" . . . . I have no doubt whatever that conditions of work in spinning mills do cause deterioration in the physique of the workers. They are undersized, jaded and generally unhealthy in appearance, which is due in my opinion partly to bad ventilation, but mainly to the strenuous working conditions obtaining in a spinning mill. Children are particularly stunted and poorly developed."

* Annual Factory Report for the Bombay Presidency for the year 1924, pages 19 and 20 :—

"Internal atmospheric conditions could be much improved."

In 1923, the Factory Inspector and the Director of Public Health in the Punjab were deputed by the Punjab Government to inquire into the condition of cotton ginning factories. Their report is suggestive and is reproduced below *:—

"In accordance with Government's note, a discussion took place between the Director of Public Health and the Inspector of Factories on the subject of cotton ginning factories and the possibility of devising some means of improving the conditions under which women work in them......

"Ginning-rooms have been visited by the Director of Public Health and the Factory Inspector, and whilst it is very evident that the dust is excessive and the health of workers must be affected, the problem of keeping down the dust is difficult to solve.

"Mechanical devices in the shape of exhaust boxes and pipes leading out of the ginning-room, at the end of which an exhaust fan is fitted, have been designed, but, on going into the cost of erecting this exhaust plant, it was found to be so heavy as to cripple the industry. The scheme of making every factory-owner install such a plant was decided to be impracticable.

"Nose and mouth masks have been got out from Europe and experiment was made in one factory. Women would not wear the masks at all, and the men would only wear them for the time a Factory Inspector was looking on: the scheme of distributing the dust masks to all factories was dropped as being useless.

"The conclusion arrived at was that little or nothing could be done to improve conditions. The only person capable of making conditions better was the worker herself. Ginning-rooms were all well-ventilated and fitted with windows at every few feet on both sides of the room; the workers close these windows or fill them up with cotton; therefore, if any improvement in working conditions in ginning-rooms is to be forthcoming, it must come from the workers themselves."

It was a hasty conclusion indeed. The labourers are incapable of improving their condition single-handed. Their illiteracy and ignorance are great stumbling blocks in their way. But

* Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, in the Punjab for the year 1923, pages 3 and 4.

they are always prepared to take up a suggestion and act on it, provided it is impressed on them sympathetically and is shown to be practical. It is true that our gin-workers do not like nose and mouth masks, but it does not imply that we should give up the attempt in despair. Much still may be done by way of persuasion, and I am confident that the plan is bound to succeed if it is handled by sympathetic persons. The labourers could be easily won over, especially when many of them are already in the habit of covering their noses and mouths with pieces of cloth. Again, it is true that they stuff up the windows with cotton. The ginning mills are at work in winter and it is only natural on their part to block the windows when they shiver from cold for want of woollen clothes. Attention has no doubt been directed by a few mills towards keeping the windows and doors open, but this attempt has not borne fruit so far.

In newly established factories, the windows and doors have been so arranged as to get the greatest possible amount of light and air. Skylights have been erected in some cases, and roofs have been raised in others. Exhaust fans have also found their way in, in a few instances, and thus pioneer steps in the right direction have already been taken. But the main problem still remains unsolved.

The mill-owners are, on an average, very conservative in their ideas and do not think highly of a scheme which entails a monetary sacrifice. I suggest that the Central Government should form a small committee of experts to inquire into the state of textile mills and ginning factories and to recommend some practical means of overcoming the glaring defects. These, if rigorously put into force, will prove highly beneficial to the labour class. Insufficient ventilation reduces both physical and mental alertness. It will be shown later how the degeneration of our labourers has set in, and the sooner some steps are taken to check it, the better for them.

The state of things now in vogue in the seasonal factories would have been impossible in an advanced country like England on account of the vigorous force wielded there by public opinion. The labourers here have practically no voice in the factory affairs. Compulsory provision must therefore be made for some sort of exhaust fans in ginning and similar factories. A kapas-

opener would go a long way to assist the ginning-room workers. It removes a great deal of dust before the *kapas* are ginned, and it would not be too much to expect that the Local Governments will make its use compulsory.

The humidification of cotton mills is another problem which has affected the physique of our workers. The need for ascertained standards was so great and was so keenly felt that the Government of India appointed Mr. Terence Maloney in 1914 to make an exhaustive inquiry into the matter. His report, a reference to which has been already made in Chapter III, was published in 1923 and is expected to prove useful. At present, the temperature in many of the humidified cotton-weaving sheds is very high and is consequently injurious to the health of weavers. Not only that. The practice of introducing steam for the purpose is bad in itself and has in some mills given place to methods by which cool, damp air is admitted. "Extreme humidity prevents evaporation, and this creates a condition in which the cooling processes of the human body operate very slowly. The heat generated by physical exertion and by the warmth of the atmosphere is carried off so gradually that it is impossible for the body to effect the necessary return to normal temperature. These conditions are aggravated when rooms are overcrowded with machinery, and when there is too little space allowed for the individual employee. The danger of infection also is greatly increased." * It is a matter of satisfaction to find that the Bombay Government has "passed rules requiring textile mills, in which artificial humidity is introduced, to maintain hygrometres, and to record readings thrice daily in the humidity register and insisting that, if the humidity exceeds a definite standard based on temperature, the introduction of humidity must cease." †

Lighting

The lighting of factories was originally unsatisfactory. The passing of the first Factory Act in 1881 empowered the Local Governments to adopt measures for the improvement of the then existing conditions. Perennial factories show a satisfactory advance in this respect. Ginning factories, not provided with

* J. H. Kelman: Labour in India, page 132.

† Annual Factory Report for Bombay for 1926, page 6.

electric lights, are poorly lighted. This increases the risk of accidents, and the early attention of the inspectors of factories must be paid to this problem.

Hours of Employment and Rest Intervals

The excessive tasking of women and children is found more or less in small factories. Well-organised factories try to remain within the pale of the law. The seasonal factories show little respect for it and violate the rule of working hours and employment of children as best as they can. The labourers are generally overworked in small factories. In ginning mills, in iron foundries and in several other petty mills, the working hours extend to about 12 per day.* The notice of working hours is sometimes not affixed and attendance is also taken irregularly.

Sometimes, the petty masters are so unscrupulous as to put ahead the hands of the factory clock half an hour or so in the morning. When the machinery is set to work, the hands are adjusted so that, after the expiry of the day, the workers have put in much more work than could legally be expected of them. The mid-day interval of an hour is similarly tampered with, and, by personal inspection, I have found that, in regular practice in ginning factories and in small iron-works, it does not mean more than 40 minutes' rest to the operatives.

When I put forward this result of personal experience, I do not mean that all the proprietors are guilty of it. Such things never occur in well-managed and well-established factories. It

* (*a*) Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the Punjab for the year 1926, page 5.

"Seasonal factories are reluctant to observe regular hours of work."

(*b*) Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the Punjab for the year 1922; Remarks of the Financial Commissioner, page 2:—

"A persistent tendency to disregard the provisions of the Act which regulate working hours in factories is observed. Owners of seasonal factories are the worst offenders in this respect, and the reduction of working hours provided for by the Amending Act is particularly resented not only by them but by the factory owners generally."

(*c*) Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, in the Punjab for the year 1916, page 1:—

"Though the cotton season was a comparatively good one, a large percentage of the ginning factories existing in the province were kept closed—usually owing to pooling arrangements—but those actually at work worked at full pressure in most districts."

is only the petty industrialist who stoops to them, and numerous instances of these irregularities may be found in ginning factories.

The cotton ginning factories work for excessively long hours, mainly on account of the pooling arrangements amongst them. Factories in one district or in one town combine together. Some of them are kept closed and the remainder worked at full pressure, even when the cotton crop is good. Such was especially the case in 1916 in the Punjab. These conditions still persist. The pooling system should be declared illegal forthwith inasmuch as it is pernicious from the social point of view.

The average factory-owner wants to have his own way. He is very hard-hearted and likes to work his labourer beyond the legal maximum of 60 hours a week. The gradual extension of the Factory Act has set him thinking, and he is prepared to migrate to Indian states where no labour-law prevails. "During 1924, one factory in Multan district was removed to an Indian state for the purpose of evading the provisions of the Indian Factories Act, whilst another in Lyallpur district is expected to be removed next session." *

This is a new danger altogether and, unless some drastic steps are taken against it, it is bound to have an injurious influence on labour conditions. It appears necessary that the Factory Act should be made obligatory on Indian states. They may be called upon to accept the Act or pass similar measures for their own territories.

Holidays

One holiday in every week is enjoined on every factory and exceptions, under the Act, have been made by Local Governments in the case of some factories—ice factories, electric generating stations, etc.

Before criticising the law as it stands, I must point out that a large number of factories work on Sundays and other holidays in defiance of the Act. Several ginning mills, oil mills, sugar mills and iron foundries work on many holidays. Some flour mills are equally unscrupulous. It is only when the factory is under company management that Sundays are generally observed as holidays. In private mills, the word of

* Annual Report on the working of factories in the Punjab for 1924, page 11.

the proprietor is law and statutory regulations are all set aside when personal and selfish interests come in.

A weekly holiday is a necessity, and its due observance is essential in the interests of labour. Here, one pertinent question arises. Why has exception been made in the case of some factories? What fault have the workers therein done that they should be deprived of a weekly day of rest? It is said that some work necessitates continuous production for technical reasons and that it is impossible to observe any day as a period of rest. But this is no fault of the labourer, and he should be secured a six-day week although the factory works continuously for seven days. In some factories, like the sugar and ice factories, the interval of rest is not granted. The work there is of an intermittent nature and the labourer gets enough leisure every day. This is sensible enough, but there appears no justification in withholding a weekly day of rest. Failing a weekly day of leisure, each permanent worker should be entitled to privilege leave on full wages for at least one month in the year.

Employment of Children

No child under twelve years of age can be employed in a factory. But, if he exceeds the age of twelve, he cannot work unless and until he carries a valid certificate or a token thereof of age and fitness on his body. These rules are in conformity with the Factories Act, but they are very seldom scrupulously observed by mill-owners. Children above 12 years of age seldom carry a certificate in smaller mills. The illegal employment of younger children still continues.* It is understood that the second visit of the inspector is not so likely and, after the first inspection is over, every possible attempt is made in smaller mills, as also in some of the bigger ones, to prolong the working hours and to employ children in contravention of the

* "(a) A visit revealed several children being worked after authorised hours. Both the occupier and manager were fined on prosecution. . . . . Three factories were prosecuted in Bombay for employing uncertified children, and convictions were secured in all cases. In addition to this, several prosecutions were instituted by District Magistrates for employing children contrary to the provisions of the Act." Annual Factory Report for Bombay, 1920, page 5.

"(b) The provisions of the Act regarding the employment of women and children in Sind were more honoured in the breach than in the observance."

Factories Act. But this does not mean that the violation of the law is impossible or unlikely before the first inspection. A breach of rule means a small fine for which several factory-owners care little. Thus, they go on defying the law, and, after the inspector has paid his usual visit, they wax bold in their attitude.

The table below shows the number of children employed in Indian factories from 1892 to 1925 :—

YEAR	BOYS	GIRLS
1892	16,299	2,589
1893	17,328	2,454
1894	18,061	2,816
1895	19,812	2,923
1896	20,462	3,526
1897	21,564	4,008
1898	23,219	4,313
1899	22,939	4,520
1900	23,106	4,623
1901	24,938	4,525
1902	26,440	4,937
1903	27,568	5,529
1904	30,273	5,345
1905	32,171	5,807
1906	35,112	6,111
1907	41,977	7,270
1908	42,786	9,359
1909	43,454	8,986
1910	43,273	8,753
1911	39,450	8,177
1912	44,132	9,664
1913	45,814	10,512
1914	48,984	11,059
1915	50,906	10,886
1916	52,147	11,371
1917	49,882	10,454
1918	53,184	10,926
1919	54,946	11,592
1920	55,503	11,933
1921	56,926	11,187
1922	56,522	11,106
1923	61,841	12,779
1924	60,240	12,291
1925	57,199	11,526

The employment of young children in factories presents various problems.* It is an undeniable fact that the mill youths look listless, pale and puny as compared with children of the same age reading in a vernacular school. The stuffy atmosphere and the din of mills produce an unhealthy effect on them. This will be clear if we look at it from a different point of view. In the year 1925, the certifying surgeons in the Punjab examined 1,580 children. They rejected 460 children out of these on the plea that they were either under twelve or over fifteen years of age. Forty-five were pronounced to be medically unfit for labour in factories, whilst thirty certificates were cancelled when children were found incapable of work on re-examination. Thus, thirty children who were declared medically fit in 1924 were incapable of proceeding with their work in 1925. There must have been some more besides who never appeared before the certifying surgeons for examination and about whose fitness or otherwise nothing could be safely asserted.

The certifying surgeons do not generally take much interest in the welfare of mill-children when granting certificates to them. A civil surgeon—an Englishman—told me in 1927 that no fee was paid for the examination of factory children and that it was impossible for the Government to expect a thorough medical test in their case.

These are stern realities. Many children, now working in mills as half-timers, would certainly be pronounced unfit if they were to undergo a proper medical test. The appointment of wholetime certifying surgeons for Bombay and Ahmedabad has exercised a wholesome check on the improper employment of children. In 1922, for example, the total number of mill-children in Bombay was 1,498. But the number of those who presented themselves for certificates reached the high figure of 13,783. Of these, only 16.8 per cent were declared physically fit and eligible for certificates. Physical fitness and age are the two essential conditions for the granting of certificates to mill-

* Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the Punjab for the year 1916, page 3.

". . . . the conditions under which children work, especially in spinning mills, cannot fail in the long run to result in the physical deterioration of the factory-labourers."

children. But in some instances physical unfitness is the direct outcome of poverty and cannot be overcome unless the child is provided with the proper means. Under these conditions, it may be advisable to grade the different employments and issue certificates for definite occupations in definite factories, provided the age-limit has been reached. This principle is certainly commendable, and an incorporation of it in the Indian Factories Act will prove productive of good results.

The minimum age-limit has of late been raised to 12 years. Some of the factories still employ children under 12—an evil, which should be soon rooted out by stern measures. Bombay, Ahmedabad and a few other big industrial centres report the prevalence of double certification of children for the purpose of working in two different mills. For instance, 12,736 children were presented for fresh certificates in Bombay in 1921. Of these, more than 47.4 per cent were detected to have been previously certified. This percentage was the smallest ever recorded for the past many years and a further improvement was effected in 1922 owing mainly to the energy of the whole-time certifying surgeon at Bombay. This evil once assumed a pernicious form at Ahmedabad and the recent appointment of another whole-time certifying surgeon at that place has resulted in a marked improvement. The elimination of double certification depends on the co-operation of both the employers and the parents, and it is hoped that the former at any rate will lend a helping hand to the authorities in this matter. The malactivities of the latter will also be checked by the enforcement of section 44-A of the Factories Act, whereby parents and guardians of children, who allow their exploitation, can be proceeded against under the law.

Inspections

The hours of employment and rest intervals, the observance of holidays, the enforcement of sanitary conditions and the fencing and guarding of machinery, all rest on a proper administration of factory law. The amount of protection given to the labourers is determined not by the number of labour statutes but by the extent to which their provisions are enforced.

Judged by this standard, I must plainly say that the administration of the Factory Act is not quite satisfactory. In the first place, a very large number of factories are inspected only once a year. Factories which are visited thrice, or more than thrice a year, represent an extremely low figure. The following tables,* which relate to the Punjab province and the Bombay presidency respectively, will throw much light on the point :—

Year	Total no. of factories inspected	Once	Twice	Thrice	More than three times	Total no. of inspectors		No. of factories not inspected
1926	512	403	97	12	...	6	In addition to ex-officio inspectors.	36
1925	479	353	101	20	5	6		48
1924	378	211	147	18	2	6		56
1923	366	158	145	40	23	6		33
1922	305	136	117	35	17	1		20
1921	242	148	67	16	11	2		19
1920	121	104	14	2	1	1		136
1919	105	62	24	12	7	1		125
1918	65	53	7	4	1	1		111
1917	72	43	20	5	4	1		99
1916	149	6)	50	25	5	1		21
1915	149	85	41	17	6	1		14
1914	187	133	41	16	3	1		10
1913†	139	92	38	8	1	1		65
1912	163	92	53	10	8	...	District Officers as ex-officio inspectors.	45
1911	155	59	74	18	4	...		50
1910	193	88	56	31	18	...		35
1909	201	81	58	45	17	...		58
1908	209	44	61	52	52	...		55

* Reports on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the Punjab province and the Bombay presidency for the years 1908–1926.

† The years 1913 and after do not include Delhi.

Year	Once only	Twice only	Three times	More than three times	Not inspected	Total
1908	28	47	60	388	15	538
1909	28	40	65	400	7	540
1910	35	63	60	387	13	558
1911	70	70	82	345	18	585
1912	130	75	44	225	213	687
1913	229	175	66	221	52	743
1914	285	179	56	248	9	777
1915	383	70	29	202	12	786
1916	448	38	15	301	66	868
1917	495	78	65	177	20	835
1918	448	38	15	301	66	868
1919	404	79	119	129	160	891
1920	372	85	128	103	206	894
1921	395	66	40	312	113	926
1922	503	221	89	147	102	1,062
1923	657	222	119	51	71	1,120
1924	791	258	74	36	52	1,211
1925	711	445	100	75	27	1,358
1926	411	446	239	276	26	1,398

Before 1907 and even after, the inspection of factories in a large number of provinces was carried on by many authorities—District Magistrates, Civil Surgeons, Assistant Commissioners and others. This system was unsatisfactory, in so far as the ex-officio inspectors had not much time to spare for a vigilant supervision of industrial establishments. The Indian Factory Labour Commission of 1907 condemned the system and suggested the appointment of whole-time inspectors for different provinces. The number of inspections fell after the publication of the report, presumably owing to the caustic remarks of the Commission.* Later on, whole-time inspectors of factories were appointed in each province to bring about uniformity and continuity of policy in carrying out the provisions of the Act.

It is evident from the above figures that the number of inspections is absolutely insufficient to cope with the situation.

* Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the Punjab during the year 1912, page 1:—

"There has been some diffidence in making inspections owing to the absence of an expert inspector and the condemnation by the Factory Commission of amateur inspections."

The illegal employment of young children continues. The men and women, especially the latter, are excessively overworked in several mills. The annual white-washing is seldom done in small factories. Sanitation is bad. Machinery is not sufficiently safeguarded, and muster-rolls are not properly kept. These are some of the many drawbacks which an industrial investigator comes across.

The mill-owners are very shrewd in their ways.* Some of them close, on hearing the likelihood of an inspection, in order to avoid searching enquiries. Others sometimes appoint an ordinary clerk as nominal occupier to take the whole responsibility on himself. Sometimes, paid chowkidars † are on the look-out for the inspector and inform their managers as soon as he alights from the railway train. This system is prevalent in the mofussil. The factories situated in one particular area sometimes combine together and keep one common watchman who is always on duty at the railway station, or on the main road. Immediately after a signal is given by the watchman, the factories are either closed or the young children illegally employed are shunted off. When the factory-inspector comes, he finds everything in order and goes back satisfied, little thinking that the clever occupier has concealed every violation of law from his eyes. ‡ Seasonal factories in Bombay and

* Margaret Read: From Field to Factory (London, 1927), pages 41 and 42:—

"A Factory Inspector in North India made a night surprise visit to a cotton mill to see if any children under nine (this was before the new Factory Act of 1922 raising the age to 15) were being employed at night. His wife was stationed at one side exit, myself at another and he went in through the main door. As soon as he was recognised by a foreman, a whistle blew and a crowd of small boys dashed out of the side doors, some to be caught and held. The Inspector then found many more hidden away under bales of cotton. The foreman took it as a matter of course. The manager, a European, was fetched from his house and, when confronted with the catch, scratched his head and said "Caught this time." Half a dozen of the smallest youngsters were taken off to the city to wait till morning, when a doctor could see them. Having no birth certificates, they had to be certified by the doctor as being under age before any case for prosecution could be made out. This instance is somewhat typical of the constant evasions of the law which go on, bringing despair to the factory inspectorate, and earning the title of exploiters for the factory-owners."

† Watchmen.

‡ By the way, I must mention that it was easy for me to get into touch with the real working of factories. No one knew me in the mofussil. It was thus easy to lay my finger on the manifold defects, whereas the same thing could not have been possible for the factory-inspector.

other places are so irregular in their working that it has been deemed difficult to ensure that none of them shall escape inspection at least once a year. Some begin their operations after the inspector has left for another cotton ginning centre. Some factories cease working before the impending visit of an inspector. "The practice of pooling adds very much to the irregular working of those (seasonal) factories, since they frequently take turn about in dealing with the cotton brought to them by merchants."*

This chapter may fitly include a brief discussion of the effects of factory conditions on the health of operatives. It is said that our mill-hands are inefficient and shirk continuous work. The Indian Factory Labour Commission of 1907, much influenced by interested evidence from mill-owners, arrived at a similar conclusion. It reported that "the Indian factory-worker is in general incapable of prolonged and intense effort. He may work hard for a comparatively short period but, even in such cases, the standard obtained is much below what would be expected in similar circumstances in any European country. His natural inclination is to spread the work he has to do over a long period of time, working in a leisurely manner throughout and taking intervals of rest whenever he feels disinclined for further exertion."

It is believed that in the cotton mills the average mill-hand wastes † about an hour and half every day, in addition to the mid-day interval of one hour, and so reduces the normal working day of ten hours to eight hours. One mill-owner at Amritsar

* Annual Factory Report for Bombay for 1917, page 4.

† Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-18 (Calcutta, 1918), page 160:—

". . . It was generally agreed that mill-hands loiter away much of the time during which they are nominally at work, one or two prominent factory-owners stating that the operatives did not actually work for more than eight hours out of the twelve at present permitted by the factory-law."

Annual Factory Report for Bombay Presidency for the year 1924, pages 19 and 20:—

". . . . The physical conditions, under which a number of operatives work, preclude the possibility of a fair day's work being done. In comparisons between Indian and European labour, the effect of climate is often left out, and it is certain that efforts made to improve working conditions would have a beneficial effect on efficiency. . . . . . ."

went so far as to say that the time wasted in loitering about extends to not less than three hours and a half. The complaints lodged against the operatives may be briefly summed up as follows :—

(1) They are not punctual in the morning when the engine starts. My experience proves beyond doubt that this accusation is absolutely unfounded. The labourers, in fact, reach the factories long before the proper time : some of them wait for two or three hours, before the engine whistles.

(2) They attend to calls of nature twice or thrice during the working hours.

(3) They leave work for smoking and drinking three or four times a day.

(4) They take their food in the working departments during the mill-hours.

(5) They sometimes go about the machinery without looking to their proper business.

The last four points are mainly true. But, in so far as facts and statements tend to a depreciation of the factory-worker, they must be accepted only with discrimination. I have watched the operatives at work very carefully and know perfectly well that they cannot help wasting some time under the present circumstances. They feel that they are overworked and underpaid and try to while away their time. Again, the climatic conditions are unfavourable, and it is extremely difficult for workers to resist temptation to sleep in summer in the working hours of the mill. According to a manager it is "damned hot in summer . . . ." in his mills. The workers go about their task in the last two hours of the working day, as if they were intoxicated. The factory-hours are rather long. The supervision is not keen either, and it is no matter for surprise, therefore, if the labourers loiter about, or lie down, instead of working.

The summer season sweats its way through, and the dry cold of winter takes its place in the north and the north-west of India. The poor labourers cannot afford woollen clothes. They close the windows and doors, if possible, or stuff them up with cotton (wherever procurable) with a view to seeking shelter from the biting cold. Under the conditions, it is advisable that cooling arrangements, supplemented by electric fans (wherever

possible)* should be introduced in summer, and heating arrangements in winter in the northern factories.

The strain of factory-work stands as a bar to the improvement of the condition of the workers and militates against the creation of a permanent labour-class. "A tired person is literally and actually a poisoned person, poisoned by his own waste-products. But so marvellously is the body constructed that, like a running stream, it purifies itself and, during repose, these toxic impurities are normally burnt up by the oxygen, brought by the blood, exerted by the kidneys, destroyed in the liver, or eliminated from the body through the lungs. So rest repairs fatigue." †

"This balance is kept true and fatigue is repaired just as long as it remains within physiological limits; that is, as long as activity is balanced by repose, when the noxious products of activity are more quickly eliminated and tissue is rebuilt. Just as soon as the metabolic equilibrium is destroyed, the organism becomes clogged by its own poisons, exhaustion results and health is impaired. The physiological normal phenomenon of fatigue becomes pathological, or abnormal exhaustion." ‡

Our factory-worker carries on his work even in times of illness. He knows his own responsibilities and persists in work, till he is thoroughly played out. A baseless and unfounded charge is sometimes levelled against him. It is said that "..... Indian labour is content with a very low standard of comfort. This secured, the Indian workman, speaking generally, takes advantage of the greater earning power given to him by increased wages to do less work, and shows no desire to earn more money by working more regularly by improving his own efficiency." § Nothing could be further from the truth.

It is true that his expenditure is more or less disproportionate, unscientific, and injudicious, but it is absolutely untrue

* Pages 27 and 28 of Bulletin No. 14 on "Factory construction and installation in Bengal" by A. T. Weston, Deputy Director of Industry. . . . issued by Government of India:—"In a Local Government factory. . . . the installation of fans has proved a great advantage. . . . in the activity of the men and the cleanliness and accuracy of their work."

† Fatigue and Efficiency by J. Goldmark, New York, 1912, page 13.

‡ Ibid.

§ Report of the Indian Industrial Commission (1916–18), Calcutta, 1918, page 151.

that an increase in his wages does not act as an incentive to further work.* Is it a fact that the people of India are given to the habit of hoarding? † So much fuss has already been made about our hoarded wealth in the press as well as on the platform. How is it possible to support it, when thousands of workers are averse to work which is sure to bring more money? I know from personal experience that an average factory-labourer goes to work even in times of illness. He lives from hand to mouth and knows that starvation will soon stare him in the face, if he stops work.

There is one thing more. The labourer is overworked. The factory conditions tell heavily on his health, and he marches off the field in a state of exhaustion. This is the main reason why the turn-over of labour is far too great in cotton weaving mills, as compared with other factories.

Women are physiologically weaker than men. Moreover, they possess a particular sex function—the bearing of children. The burden of factory life weighs more heavily upon them than upon men. This makes necessary a certain period of rest before and after confinement, which they cannot afford to have. In the circumstances, it is natural that their health should be impaired. This results in an increase of infantile mortality, a decrease of birth-rate and an impaired future generation.

I have already stated that the labourer carries on his work even when ill.‡ My investigations show that the regularity of labour is more or less dependent on the area of recruitment and the conditions of work. The labourers will be comparatively more regular, if the factory is situated in a rural area.§ In a

* It is said, however, that the Mohammadan weaver takes advantage of the higher wages to increase his earnings. (Burnett-Hurst), page 66.

† Indian Year Book, 1927—Times of India Press, Bombay, page 397.

"Tradition says that he hoarded coin under the ground. . ."

‡ "A young Muslim woman on piece-work, when asked whether she would not stop to eat, replied: 'No, I have got to work, work, work till I die. I cannot stop. Oh, I am very tired. I am always tired." Kelman: Labour in India, page 86.

§ The figures that follow were collected by me in 1927 from the factory-owners' registers.

factory at Sujanpore (Punjab), the average absence of an operative every month was ½ day in 1925-26. It was higher in May—the harvesting season—when it rose to one day per labourer per month. It gradually went down in June and July. In August and September—malarial months—it rose as high as 1.6 days per labourer per month. In another mill, labour is mainly recruited from rural areas near by. Skilled labour is housed in factory-quarters which are very sanitary. The average absence per operative comes up to only 1/3 day per month. It rises, though very little, in the harvesting and malarial seasons.

The average period of absence increases, when the mill becomes dependent partly on local and partly on outside labour and when its conditions of work are unwholesome. In a cotton mill in Amritsar, about 10 per cent of the workers are absent every day.

In the Bombay presidency, we find that there is a large percentage of absentees. The percentage is high in the beginning of the month and comes down to its minimum near the pay-day: it is at its maximum in the harvesting season. "Mr. Engels, Chief Inspector of Factories, estimated that about 20 per cent of the regular staff were on the average absent every day. The Bombay Labour Gazette states that normally 15 to 20 per cent of those on the wages-book are away from work."* The following statement † refers to absenteeism in

* Burnett-Hurst: page 59.

† Bombay Labour Gazette (see absenteeism)—Monthly reports for the year 1927-28.

Also please refer to the replies given by the Bombay Mill-owners' Association to the questionnaire issued by the Tariff Board in reference to the Indian Cotton Industry. "As regards absenteeism, the Association quoted the Labour Office figures which for June 1926 showed an absenteeism of 11.13 per cent in the Bombay city and island, 2.54 per cent in Ahmedabad and 15.5 per cent in Sholapur. It pointed out further that the 'badli' system materially affected efficiency in Bombay mills.

"Asked whether the other mill centres had advantages or disadvantages over Bombay, the Association replied that, in their opinion, Ahmedabad had an advantage over Bombay in regard to the continuity of the labour supply, having a much more permanent factory population and a smaller amount of absenteeism" Bombay Labour Gazette—September, 1926, pages 59 and 60.

the textile industry in the Bombay Presidency for the year 1927-28.

Month		Percentage of absentees	Month		Percentage of absentees
July	1927	7.99	January	1928	8.14
August	1927	7.35	February	1928	8.76
September	1927	8.90	March	1928	8.70
October	1927	9.01	April	1928	8.27
November	1927	8.74	May	1928	Not available
December	1927	7.77	June	1928	Not available

Turnover rates for labour are also high in other parts of India. These vary in different factories, occupations and periods. They are very high in seasonal industries, comparatively low in others. Generally speaking, we can say that the turnover is high in the harvesting season when there are temptations and opportunities for change. Besides seasonal and cyclical changes, the main cause of the turnover of labour is dissatisfaction either on the part of the employer, or that of the employee. But this tendency to shift may be held in check, when the workers are illiterate and disorganised and when they possess no definite knowledge of the conditions of the labour market. Such is the position in India, and it is no wonder to find that several labourers in isolated factories try to stick to their jobs, however unwholesome their environments may be.* The average period of service of a labourer in a Sujanpore factory (Punjab) is about seven years. The majority of workers in a factory in the Lahore district have been there for many years. In another factory near Rawalpindi, the average period of service is about four years. But turnover rates are high—very high—in urban areas. In a mill at Amritsar, the average period of service is as low as a year and a half, and it is less than 10 months in another mill situated near by. We are still in a transitional stage, and our conditions will take long to settle down. Wherever the conditions have greatly improved, the rate of turnover has come down automatically. The accompanying statement shows the annual labour turnover of the Tata Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur for the year 1926 and throws much light on several relevant points.

* Compare Solomon Blum: Labour Economics, page 193 :—

"An Englishman working in a Lancashire cotton mill as a rule works in a Lancashire cotton mill from his young manhood, till he is ready to step out. A woman worker seldom marries across country lines. An English farm labourer in Devonshire remains an English farm labourer in Devonshire. If he moves, it is not to some other part of England: he generally moves to Australia, to Canada or the United States. In settled countries, men are not likely to move very rapidly from place to place."

MONTHS	Percentage of annual labour turnover	Total number of monthly rated employees	Total number of men discharged	Total number of men employed (new)	Total number of men employed in place of men on leave, etc.	Analysis of Discharges													
						Resigned	Absent without leave	Reduction	Temporary	Misconduct	Incompetent and unfit	Irregular attendance	Services no longer required	Unsatisfactory work	Death	Unwilling to work	Neglect of duty	Short of orders	Contract expired
January ...	27.6	20,002	701	86	545	194	323	22	57	11	8	42	1	9	15	13	6	...	...
February ...	25.2	20,302	851	224	480	243	288	145	85	16	2	24	...	12	9	15	11	...	...
March ...	34.8	19,994	933	209	623	254	348	147	45	29	3	38	...	12	14	18	15	10	...
April ...	33.6	19,911	888	331	634	303	327	121	35	9	10	38	...	7	13	10	7	7	...
May ...	49.2	20,828	883	374	868	310	343	40	40	11	7	47	...	37	4	33	11	...	...
June ...	39.6	20,696	812	425	694	344	298	26	51	8	4	47	...	6	8	12	8	...	...
July ...	43.2	21,129	858	141	626	198	314	120	115	19	3	29	...	19	13	15	13	...	...
August ...	36.6	21,162	523	136	526	189	181	45	26	13	1	29	1	9	9	11	9	...	...
September ...	25.2	21,192	489	147	458	193	192	4	22	9	7	30	...	7	14	4	6	...	1
October ...	16.8	21,170	765	109	308	145	158	116	7	6	2	18	...	6	3	2	4	...	...
November ...	16.8	20,863	726	271	306	214	212	196	11	17	1	18	1	6	14	8	6	...	15
December ...	24.0	21,071	498	170	437	198	234	4	5	4	2	10	...	4	11	19	6	...	1

The more or less migratory character of labour may be accounted for by one or more of the following reasons :—

(1) Bad and unhealthy environment. The Indian factories, as I have described above, are not models of sanitation. Far from it. The environment is very bad in certain cases, and the labourer, if not homeless, tries to keep his family in his native village, where they can breathe free air. His wife and children are a great attraction for him, and the farther they are situated from the factory, the greater will be the period of absence. This absence of the labourers "has a beneficial effect upon their health as reflected by weight, and counteracts to a very large extent the effects of working and living conditions in Bombay."*

(2) A large number of labourers move on to the fields in the harvesting season. They shift to rural areas because they can earn much more on land during that period. An ordinary labourer gets 6 annas daily at Sujanpore (Punjab). He gets 8 annas to 10 annas in villages in the harvesting season. But, sometimes, he may not leave the factory even on such tempting conditions for fear of losing his permanent job.

(3) Indiscriminate hiring and summary dismissals also do their work. Workers are often put on tasks which are not suited to them. Dismissals thereby take place and result in much waste of time and energy to the employers, as well as to the employees. This could be avoided, if the labourers were selected on some scientific principle.

(4) Labourers are subject to general debility and slow fever and go back to their villages for recuperation.

(5) Long working hours and distasteful factory conditions also account for the tendency of labourers to shift from factory to factory.

(6) Some of the unwholesome habits of labourers are also responsible for their absence. A large number absent themselves from spinning mills on the day following pay-day. An improvement in this direction—a reform in their habits and ideas—would surely go a long way in bringing down the period of absence.

* T. Maloney : Humidification in Indian Cotton Mills (Delhi, 1923).

(7) There is no permanence of tenure for the labourers. To begin with, there is a very large list of day-to-day workers all over. They can be turned out at any time at the will of the manager. Skilled labour, which enjoys a more or less permanent tenure, is also retrenched in anticipation of bad market conditions. This is a regrettable feature of factories in India and, unless some material improvement is made in this direction, not much can be done to slow down the tendency towards migration of labour. The statement of the general manager of the Tata Iron and Steel Company to the Indian Industrial Commission in 1917 is well worth consideration :—

"Our employees come from all parts of India. We afford a source of continuous employment all the year round to a great many people, our total number of employees being 15 to 16 thousand, the majority of whom, before our works started, mainly followed agricultural pursuits, which entailed intermittent and uncertain occupation."

The conditions in Tata Works are not ideal. Still, they have got a permanent and steady labour-supply on account of good houses, continuous employment, attention to sanitation, recreation and education of workers.

(8) Frequent diseases increase the rate of absence and turnover of labour.

(9) Most of the workers are unskilled. Thus, they can take to work in any factory.

It is now easy to conclude that the amelioration of the condition of factories will have a healthy influence on the workers. It is impossible to describe the precise influence which factory conditions exert on the operatives. Indirect inferences may, however, be readily drawn. I have rarely seen a labourer above 45 years of age, working in a spinning and weaving mill.* It is said that he retires to his village to enjoy his well-earned rest—a far-fetched idea, of course. The labourer lives from hand to mouth throughout his life, and there is no possibility of the creation of a reserve for utilisation in old age. Thus, it would not be contrary to truth, if we conclude

* Provincial Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the Bombay presidency for the year 1892, page 5 :—

"In Bombay, the workers are seldom over forty and practically are never seen over 50 years."

that unfavourable factory conditions adversely affect longevity. The labourers are conservative in their habits and like to return to their villages to die amongst their near and dear ones, as soon as they fall seriously ill. Thus, cases of influenza, malaria, plague, or consumption which ought otherwise to have been reported from the factory area are put down haphazardly in the village registers. It is therefore difficult to trace the connection between factory conditions and ill-health. Moreover, the labourers are not medically examined, when they join a factory. Nothing is known of their life-history and, when cases of consumption and other diseases occur, it is not easy to trace their origin. I think that a periodical medical examination of all workers should be enjoined on employers. We stand badly in need of factory medical inspectors to go round and study the different cases closely. Cases of consumption and other respiratory diseases often occur, and it is necessary to know whether they are due to the environments of the factory as such, or to external circumstances. I have come across labourers suffering from respiratory diseases and, after questioning them about their life-history from a layman's point of view, I have been forced to the conclusion that they are due mostly to bad factory conditions.

Some indirect inferences from bad factory conditions may be drawn in one way. I took the weights and heights of 238 labourers—skilled and unskilled—in some of the Punjab mills in 1927. Of these, about 149 had been in service for more than five years, and about 200 had been working in the same factory for not less than three years. I also took the weights and heights of 495 prisoners in a few of the Punjab jails. The results are given below, and they establish beyond doubt that the health of an average labourer is not comparable with that of an average prisoner. It need hardly be mentioned that the comparison is only a rough and ready way of measuring results. The labourers and prisoners are not on the same level. The latter are not free. They get bare subsistence, and their life is in no way attractive; cases of corruption and abuse of power sometimes occur in the jails.* In spite of all these drawbacks, they enjoy

* Proceedings of His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab in Council, Home (Jails) Department, No. 15163, dated the 2nd June, 1924—See report on the Administration of the Jails in the Punjab for 1923, page 4.

"This is not to say that the administration of the Punjab prisons, like every

better health as compared with the factory operatives, indirectly proving thereby that factory conditions are partly responsible for the deterioration of the health of workers.

Jail A

Number of each height	Height in inches	Average weight in lbs.
4	60 to 61	$117\frac{1}{2}$
3	61 to 62	$111\frac{1}{3}$
6	62 to 63	$110\frac{5}{6}$
11	63 to 64	114
24	64 to 65	121
29	65 to 66	$125\frac{1}{2}$
32	66 to 67	127
42	67 to 68	$134\frac{1}{8}$
23	68 to 69	$134\frac{3}{4}$
15	69 to 70	141
7	70 to 71	$139\frac{1}{3}$
3	71 to 72	146
...	72 to 73	...
1	73 to 74	136
Total 200	60 to 74	About 127·6

Jail B

Number of each height	Height in inches	Average weight in lbs.
1	60 to 61	95
5	61 to 62	$103\frac{1}{5}$
5	62 to 63	116
10	63 to 64	$119\frac{1}{3}$
12	64 to 65	121
18	65 to 66	124
12	66 to 67	126
11	67 to 68	126
7	68 to 69	$141\frac{1}{3}$
9	69 to 70	145
3	70 to 71	$133\frac{2}{3}$
2	71 to 72	135
Total 95	60 to 72	About 123.8

other branch of the administration, is not susceptible of great improvement, or that untiring vigilance is not required to prevent corruption and the abuse of power within the jails . . ."

Jail C

Number of each height	Height in inches.	Average weight in lbs.
2	60 to 61	105
3	61 to 62	111
8	62 to 63	115¾
16	63 to 64	118⅕
13	64 to 65	122
17	65 to 66	127⅓
17	66 to 67	132¾
14	67 to 68	131½
7	68 to 69	137
3	69 to 70	141
...	70 to 71	...
1	71 to 72	147
Total 101	60 to 72	About 126.2

Jail D

Number of each height	Height in inches	Average weight in lbs.
3	60 to 61	102
4	61 to 62	109
11	62 to 63	111½
10	63 to 64	112
16	64 to 65	110
18	65 to 66	130⅓
18	66 to 67	126
10	67 to 68	131
4	68 to 69	135½
3	69 to 70	134
1	70 to 71	164
1	71 to 72	164
Total 99	60 to 72	About 127.5

Factory A

Number of each height	Height in inches	Average weight in lbs.
2	60 to 61	99
3	61 to 62	$101\frac{1}{3}$
12	62 to 63	109
27	63 to 64	$122\frac{2}{3}$
38	64 to 65	116
16	65 to 66	123
6	66 to 67	120
2	67 to 68	128
3	68 to 69	$123\frac{1}{3}$
...	69 to 70	...
...	70 to 71	...
3	71 to 72	144
Total 112	60 to 72	About 118.5

Factory B

Number of each height	Height in inches	Average weight in lbs.
5	60 to 61	$96\frac{3}{5}$
...	61 to 62	...
1	62 to 63	100
5	63 to 64	101
4	64 to 65	106
3	65 to 66	$118\frac{1}{3}$
1	66 to 67	111
2	67 to 68	$123\frac{1}{2}$
1	68 to 69	120
Total 22	60 to 69	About 109.3

Factory C

Number of each height	Height in inches	Average weight in lbs.
...	60 to 61	...
...	61 to 62	...
3	62 to 63	116
3	63 to 64	116
4	64 to 65	$111\frac{1}{4}$
2	65 to 66	119
3	66 to 67	$117\frac{1}{3}$
...	67 to 68	...
3	68 to 69	$144\frac{1}{3}$
1	69 to 70	140
1	70 to 71	134
Total 20	60 to 71	About 124.7

Factory D

Number of each height	Height in inches	Average weight in lbs.
...	60 to 61	...
1	61 to 62	102
1	62 to 63	112
1	63 to 64	90
1	64 to 65	105
1	65 to 66	110
2	66 to 67	112
2	67 to 68	126
Total 9	60 to 68	About 108.1

Factory E

Number of each height	Height in inches	Average weight in lbs.
3	60 to 61	102
2	61 to 62	100
5	62 to 63	110
8	63 to 64	105
9	64 to 65	105
11	65 to 66	115
9	66 to 67	120½
6	67 to 68	120
1	68 to 69	132
4	69 to 70	134¼
2	70 to 71	125
1	71 to 72	122
Total 61	60 to 72	About 116 lbs.

The average weight* of labourers taken all in all comes up to about 115.3 lbs. whereas the average weight of prisoners has been estimated at 126.3 lbs. This evidently proves that, man for man, an average prisoner is surely better off in health than an average factory-labourer. Will it not therefore be advisable to come to the rescue of the labourers and shorten their working hours at least from sixty to fifty-four per week by law?

* Dr. Nair, a member of the Indian Factory-Labour Commission of 1907, contended that the long working hours in factories were responsible for the physical deterioration and general debility of labourers. He took the weights of factory-labourers at random and his results may be thus given :—

PROVINCE	Average weight of spinners	Average weight of prisoners	Difference
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
Bombay	102.09	112.12	10.03
United Provinces	107.01	115.08	8.07
Bengal	107.93	115.05	7.12
Punjab	113.08	115.05	1.97
Madras	113.63	114.38	0.75
C. P. and Berar	100.92	110.45	9.53
Eastern Bengal and Assam	108.00	110.84	2.84
Burma	117.14	125.7	8.56

I was perhaps the first industrial investigator who advocated a reduction of working hours to a maximum of ten per day in his report to the Punjab Government in 1920. This has almost come to pass. The maximum number of hours has been fixed at eleven per day and at sixty per week. I now suggest that a further reduction should be made as early as possible.

The question requires a detailed consideration, and experiments in this direction can easily be made by the Government which happens to be a great employer of labour. Shorter factory hours have exercised a healthy influence in the West. They have also enabled workers to come from a longer distance and thereby diminish the congestion of dwellings near the mill area.

Long working hours produce harmful effects on the physical and mental capacities of workers. "The problem of hours has undergone a fundamental change through the introduction of large-scale factory production and the growing concentration of our population in cities. Men and women can work relatively long hours at work which is interesting, which calls upon their various energies, which gives some opportunity for creative self-expression. Work which is repetitive, monotonous and conducted under the confining indoor conditions of even the best industrial plant, especially where the plant is located at a distance from the home of the workers, makes much more exacting physical and nervous demands." *

The age of machinery has brought about fatigue. Under fatigue "the physiological processes become pathological; normal instruments of life become agents of death." † Fatigue is furthered by the speed and complexity of machinery, by the monotony of work, by the introduction of piece-work and overtime conditions. It is induced by the roar of machinery which naturally distracts attention. It accumulates with progressive hours of work and brings about industrial accidents. No attempt has so far been made to find out the connection between fatigue and the time of accidents in factories. A study in this direction is well worth the attention of research scholars.

It is an admitted fact that long working hours have largely resulted in the deterioration of our workers. The ideal length

* President's Second Industrial Conference Report, 1920—quoted by Edie in his Principles of the New Economics; U. S. A., 1922, page 112.

† Fatigue and Efficiency by J. Goldmark; New York, 1912, page 14.

of working day for each industry in the present stage of our advancement is relative to the conditions of that industry. Even now, some factories work for 10 hours, some work for 9½ hours, while a few have a continuous working day of 8 hours.

It is universally admitted that reasonably short working hours do not bring down the output per man. They may result in an increased output. "The outstanding feature of the 8-hour day is steady maintenance of output. The outstanding feature of the 10-hour day is the decline of output. Under the 8-hour system, work with almost full power begins and ends approximately on schedule, and lost time is reduced to a minimum. Under the 10-hour system, work ceases before the end of the spell and lost time is frequent." *

As the Indian Factory-labour Commissioners said in 1908, "where the hours are short and supervision is good, the operatives can be trained to adopt fairly regular and steady habits of working; where the hours are long and the discipline of the factory is bad, the workers will idle through the time and take frequent intervals away from the work." †

The shortening of the working day will put an end to much idling and loitering on the part of workers. Under proper safeguards, they may be made very steady in their habits. When the hours of work are brought down as, in the course of time, they must be, the following system of passes may be adopted to check the loitering habit of workers as they move from the factory to the dispensary or the lavatory and *vice-versa*. This will require a certain amount of literacy, without which the scheme cannot be given a practical shape.

No.	No.
Name of Factory :—	Name of Factory :—
Dispensary (or Lavatory) Permit	Dispensary (or Lavatory) Permit
Department :—	Time of leaving :—
Name of Labourer :—	Next visit :— (In the case of dispensary only)
Time of leaving :—	
Signature of foreman :—	Signature of Person-in-charge :—

* U. S. Public Health Bulletin, Washington, 106—February, 1920, page 26.

† Report of the Indian Factory-Labour Commission, 1908; London, 1908, Vol. I, pages 21 and 22.

But I must sound a word of caution at this stage. It is possible that shorter hours may involve intensification of labour and may thus be dearly bought. Thus, "the real question of leisure is a question of spare human energy rather than of spare hours." * The question, I must repeat once again, requires a detailed study, and the sooner it is taken up for investigation by a Government Committee, the better for all concerned.

Our workers are uneducated, and greater leisure, attainable through shorter hours, could be utilised by them in acquiring the rudiments of knowledge. Single-handed, they are incapable of anything. Aided by Government and social workers, they could surely achieve much. Adult schools, popular lectures on hygiene, educative cinema shows—these are all useful and could certainly improve the vision of our workers and raise their standard of living.

Leisure creates great potentialities for social uplift. The poet, the man of science, the philosopher—in fact, every man is at his best in his leisure hours, and it is here and here alone that a stimulus can be given to his inventive and creative tendencies. Under the present industrial conditions, leisure supplies the much needed counterpoise to the monotony of machines and enables the worker to awaken his neglected faculties and work them up to a proper standard.

The Inspectors are empowered under the Factory Act to prohibit the presence of children in a dangerous part of a factory, but their wholesale exclusion is not a practicable proposition. Children of two or three years cannot be left at home, and it is thus necessary that they should be protected from the undesirable consequences of factory life. I think every factory employing women should compulsorily provide crēches under the supervision of a trained nurse. This will be a boon to women-workers. It is also advisable to appoint qualified medical women to inquire into the condition of women's work before and after child-birth and to help factory-owners in instituting maternity schemes.

The question of the provision of maternity benefits dates back to the year 1919, when the first International Conference met at Washington. A Convention was then passed that the

* Hobson: Work and Wealth, New York, 1914, page 233.

employment of women within six weeks after confinement should be legally prohibited, and that they should be at liberty to leave their jobs six weeks before confinement without fear of dismissal. The Convention also provided for maternity benefits.

The Government of India did not give their consent to this Convention, but agreed, on the other hand, to submit a report on the question. This was done and it was regretted that the time for legislation of this nature had not come. It was, however, hoped that voluntary schemes of maternity benefits would soon be launched by enlightened employers in India.

On the 23rd September, 1924, Mr. N. M. Joshi introduced a Bill in the Legislative Assembly to prevent employers from dismissing women six weeks before confinement and to provide for maternity benefits. The Maternity Benefits Bill was humanitarian in nature, and its application, besides others, was suggested to the factories under the Indian Factories Act. The Bill was circulated by the Government of India to employers, Local Governments and others concerned. The public at large favoured the scheme. It was, however, objected that maternity benefits would place a burden on the industries of India. It was also feared that the employers would dismiss permanent hands to avoid the payment of maternity allowance.

Some of the Local Governments opposed the Bill, while others supported the principle, if not all the details. The Government of India opposed the measure on the following grounds:—

(*a*) It was said that the compulsory abstention from work of expectant mothers could not be enforced, as they would be easily won over by unregistered factories.

(*b*) The right to leave work six weeks before confinement was dependent on the production of a medical certificate. The paucity of lady-doctors in India would check the smooth working of maternity schemes.

(*c*) Expectant mothers did not find any difficulty in securing employment after confinement.

These arguments do not apply with equal force in all the provinces. The number of women-workers is not large, and a small number of lady-doctors would solve the whole difficulty. The condition of the labour market is not favourable, anu

I can say from experience that women have to accept low remuneration on their return to work after confinement. This evidently proves that there is not much scope for them in unregistered factories.

After a heated debate, the Bill was thrown out by the House. Bombay, however, took her own line of policy, and Mr. R. S. Asavale was given leave on the 19th March, 1928, to introduce a Bill in the Local Legislative Council "to regulate the employment of women in factories sometime before, and sometime after, confinement and to make provision for the payment of maternity benefit."* It was referred to a Select Committee and passed into law on the 15th March, 1929. It came into operation on the 1st day of July, 1929, as the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act. Its main provisions are the following:—

(1) It shall apply in the first instance to the Bombay suburban district and the cities of Bombay, Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Surat, Broach, Jalgaon, Sholapur, Belgaum, Amalner and Karachi. The Government may from time to time extend the Act to any other place.

(2) No factory shall knowingly employ a woman during the four weeks immediately following the day of her delivery.

(3) The maximum period for which any woman shall be entitled to the payment of maternity benefit shall be seven weeks, i.e., three weeks before and four weeks after delivery.

(4) The maternity benefits shall be paid by the employer at the rate of eight annas per day for the actual days of absence and shall be payable after a service of not less than six months with the same employer.

(5) No notice of dismissal shall be given to a woman during the period of maternity benefit.

Further provisions relate to the procedure for the payment of maternity benefits, to penalties regarding contravention of the Act by an employer or by a woman and to the power of making rules under the Act.

In the absence of any statutory provision in other provinces, it is advisable that enlightened employers should set the example and institute voluntary schemes of maternity benefits. A special survey of the conditions of women's labour in Bengal

* Labour Gazette, Bombay, September, 1928, Vol. VIII, No. 1, page 56.

industries was carried out by Dr. Curjel (now Mrs. Wilson) in 1921 and 1922. Her findings were embodied in Bulletin No. 31 published by the Government of India in 1923. She wrote that the absence of women-workers in textile mills—mainly, jute mills—at the time of child-birth depended entirely on economic considerations. It varied from 2 to 4 days, and, according to her, they had no difficulty in returning to their old jobs. She further found that the management did not trouble to find out, if the absence of a woman was due to any reason connected with maternity. Children were taken freely into the mills, the atmosphere of many of which was unfavourable to their health. There were no crēches, and the little children were either left all alone, or they were entrusted to some brother or sister, too young to be employed in the factory.

Since the publication of the report of Mrs. Wilson, some advanced factory-owners in Bengal and outside have introduced measures for the welfare of women and children. One of these schemes has been in force since 1924 in a jute mill in the Bengal presidency and has proceeded on the following lines * :—

"(1) A weekly class for the instruction of local *dais* and supply of all necessary appliances and an inducement of annas two per head per class.

"(2) Weekly sewing classes for mothers who are taught to cut and sew garments.

"(3) Babies are weighed at regular intervals and charts maintained showing their progress.

"(4) Special food provided for ailing children.

"(5) Bed-ridden mothers and lying-in-patients visited by the matron at their houses."

Mr. R. N. Gilchrist † reports another experiment in a second jute mill. The work here is conducted in the following manner :—

"(1) A bi-weekly class for expectant mothers and instruction given in :—

(*a*) Hygiene.
(*b*) Child care.
(*c*) Simple dietetics.

* Article on "Women and Children in Bengal Industries" in the 'Capital,' dated August 23, 1928, page 396, columns 2 and 3.

† Ibid.

"(2) A weekly class for indigenous *dais* at which the average attendance is 8. The *dais* call the health-visitor to supervise confinements so that practical instruction may be given. It is hoped to prepare *dais* for the provincial examination in due course.

"(3) Homes are visited with a view to raising the standard of cleanliness and teaching and advising mothers. All babies, born in the coolie lines and notified, are visited, and a record kept of their progress up to school age.

"(4) Daily consultations are arranged for, and mothers are encouraged to bring their children at regular intervals for advice and registration of their weight.

"(5) Daily treatment of minor ailments of women-workers and wives of male-workers.

"(6) A benefit scheme introduced, whereby mothers of over a year's service receive 4 weeks' maternity leave."

These welfare schemes are slowly finding their way in Indian factories, though the number of those that are working satisfactorily at present is rather small. Crēches have been introduced in some mills, but they have not proved an unqualified success. Religious scruples, supplemented by mutual distrust and suspicion, have been a great obstacle, but they will slowly disappear, as the workers learn their value by actual observation. The maternity schemes have difficulties of their own. "In one jute-mill, for example, a scheme was devised whereby women received not only weekly payments two weeks before and three weeks after child-birth, but were allowed to discontinue work for that period. After the scheme had been working for some time, it was found that in many cases the privilege was abused by women, staying away from work only from 3 or 4 to 6 days, and going to work, while enjoying maternity benefit, in neighbouring mills."* This is a natural consequence of poverty, but it is possible to prevent such evasions by vigilant supervision.

Poor as the labourers are, they must not be allowed to stagnate. 'Poverty' is infectious and, in the absence of any preventive measures, it is bound to grow from more to more.

* Article on 'Women and Children in Bengal Industries' by R. N. Gilchrist in 'Capital' dated August 23, 1928, pages 396 and 397.

Acquiescence in poverty is cowardly, and struggle against it a human virtue.

The prevalent conditions of factories bring down the output of our workers. But they are not, sometimes, to blame for it. They have to deal at times with old and worn-out machinery.* Machinery is imported from the West. Improvements are effected in it from day to day, and it is difficult for our industrialists to be quite up-to-date. Again, the material which our workers handle sometimes does not compare favourably with that used in the West. This fact has been corroborated by factory managers during my investigations. For example, a great defect of our Indian cotton is the shortness of its fibre. Climatic conditions too stand in the way of the workers, and long working hours put an undue strain on their muscles.

The workers are still rural in their habits. They require constant attention at work which, however, is not available. Some managers are no better than the workers themselves. The workers have no doubt gained in skill and dexterity of late, but their environments are dull and do not arouse any enthusiasm in them.

Comparisons are often made of the industrial efficiency of our workers with those of the West. It is a mistake to indulge in them. Unless and until the real wages of our workers come up to the standard of the western world, and unless and until their social environments change, it is a folly to talk of the inefficiency of Indian labour. It is said that "so far as spinning was concerned, one Englishman could do as much as two Indians." † Evidence before the Indian Factory Labour Commission of 1907 all tended towards the depreciation of the

* Report of the Indian Factory-Labour Commission, 1908, London, 1908, minute of dissent, page 85:—"In a memorandum submitted to His Excellency the Marquis of Lansdowne, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, in 1889 by the mill-operatives of Bombay, it was stated that 'It has been said to the detriment of your petitioners that an Indian mill-operative is not as hardworking as his brother workman in England . . . the real cause of this . . . is the bad machinery and the bad raw material used in the mills. . . . The breakage in the thread is so continuous here on account of the bad quality of the cotton that mill-owners are compelled to employ more men.' "

† Mr. Leslie of Messrs. Greaves, Cotton & Co., Bombay, in his evidence before the Indian Factory-Labour Commission of 1907-08. *Vide* Indian Factory-Labour Commission Report, Vol. II, Evidence—London, 1909—page 62.

industrial aptitude of Indian workers. This is, no doubt, true to some extent, but the statements as they stand have to be taken with a grain of salt. The mill-owners wanted to defend their long working hours by running down the employees, and the facts and figures collected by them might well be misleading.

Our labour compares favourably with Japan. "In Japanese factories, the aggregate of employees is still fully three-fold of what would be considered necessary for the same work in England.*

But there is a fair field of improvement for our workers. They are recruited from the agriculturist class which has won a world-wide reputation for industrious habits, and there is no reason why they should not make steady headway in their new walk of life, when environments take a healthy turn.

No systematic record-keeping exists in our factories. Needless to say, it is coming into prominence in the West. In India, on the other hand, the human factor in industry has been greatly ignored. It is the name only of the wage-earner that appears in the factory-books. And even that is sometimes wrongly written. When the worker is absent from his work, no notice is taken of him. There are no separate records to show his wages or his efficiency rate.

India has been linked up with the rest of the civilized world through international conferences, and it is essential that she should know and realise her own position. This is only possible through systematic record-keeping. Factory-owners, as my experience shows, object to these records, because they labour under the delusion that they are expensive. Really, they are not. They add to the efficiency of workers and decrease the cost of production for the factory. For example, the question of the tendency of workers to shift their place of employment frequently has never been closely examined. I have shown elsewhere that this can be accounted for by several reasons—unhealthy factory environments, bad houses, insufficient wages, sickness, accidents, etc. If systematic records were maintained of each one of these factors and if an honest attempt was made at removing them, the output of labour would certainly increase. The

* The Evolution of New Japan: Cambridge Manual Science Series, 1913, page 99.

workers may possibly object to these records, since they would be inquisitorial in nature. But their prejudice can be easily overcome, if they are handled by sympathetic persons. I commend the following draft records * to the notice of mill-owners :—

I.—Employees' Record

Name :— Caste :— No :—

Present address :— Names of relatives working in the factory :— Date of Application :—

Home address :—

Department :— Age :—

Date of appointment	Punctuality	Ability	Conduct	Health

II.—Efficiency Rate Record

Name :— No :—

Months	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	etc.	etc.
January ...							
February ...							
March							
April							
May							
June							
July							
August ...							
September ...							
October ...							
November ...							
December ...							

* These draft records have been modelled with modifications and changes on those in use in some of the English factories that I visited in 1926, 1927 and 1928. The article of Miss Broughton (now Lady Chatterji) on "Labour Records in Factories" in the Journal of Indian Industries and Labour for February, 1922 was also helpful to me in framing the above draft-records.

III.—Employers' Weekly Wages Record

Name :— No :—
Occupation :— Left :—
Address :— Engaged :—

Week-ending		Week-ending	
	Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.
1		14	
2		15	
3		16	
4		17	
5		18	
6		19	
7		20	
8		21	
9		22	
10		23	
11		24	
12		25	
13		26	
Total 1st quarter		Total 2nd quarter	

Similarly, for the third and the fourth quarter.

IV.—Labour Turn-over

Total numbers employed in the factory	Number of employees who left	Left Voluntarily					Dismissed or Discharged						
		Illness	Bad treatment from mill	Bad factory conditions	Leaving place altogether	Other reasons	Bad Health	Incapable	Careless	Retrenchment	Unsatisfactory	Other reasons	Percentage rate of men leaving the factory

V.—Monthly Return of Cases Reported to the Factory Hospital

1. Men
2. Women
3. Male Children
4. Female Children

MONTHS	Nos. Employed	Respiratory Tract	Circulatory System	Central Nervous System	Special Sense Organ	Locomotive System	Skin	Influenza	Malaria and other fevers	Infectious diseases	Accident and Septic cases	Total no. of sickness cases	Percentage rate of sickness
January ...													
February ...													
March ...													
April ...													
May ...													
June ...													
July ...													
August ...													
September ...													
October ...													
November ...													
December ...													

Note for guidance :—Plague, malaria and cholera should be given separately.

Before I close, I must reiterate the necessity for a very rigorous enforcement of the Factory Act. "It is easy to disgust people even with a good law, if that law is fraudulently or sluggishly administered." *

* Solomon Blum : Labour Economics ; New York—1925 ; page 79. Also refer to Margaret Read : From Field to Factory (London, 1927), page 41 :—

"But it is one thing for a Government to have good factory laws and another to have them carried out, especially when there is little or no public opinion in favour of their observance, and no trade-union organization to stand behind them. The factory inspecting staff is far too small, the distances are immense and many factories cannot be visited even once a year."

Dr. D. F. Curjel (now Mrs. Wilson) writes :—

" It will be seen from the conditions noted, as existing in the various industries in Bengal, that there is great need for a considerable increase in the factory inspection staff . . . ."

(Bulletin of Indian Industries and Labour, No. 31, Calcutta, 1923, page 3).

CHAPTER VII

HOUSING AND HEALTH

THE housing of factory labourers is a problem by itself. They live partly in quarters—one-room tenements—built particularly for them, and partly in villages and towns. Their accommodation does not offer any serious difficulties in Nagpur, Rawalpindi, Aligarh, etc., where provision for the workers is certainly easy, especially on the outskirts of these towns. But the position becomes rather intricate when large industrial centres like Bombay, Ahmedabad, Calcutta and Cawnpore are considered.

The quarters in the Punjab are sometimes very close to the factories. I observed this at Lyallpur, Amritsar, and a few other places. In some cases, the distance between the quarters and mills is not more than ten feet. Such was particularly the case with a flour mill at Lyallpur which I first visited in 1920. The result was that the particles of dust and flour from it covered things all round and put the inmates to much inconvenience. They generally covered their mud-rooms with torn off rags and gunny cloth from all sides. These precautions were not of any use: they were, on the contrary, harmful to the health and physique of those women, who, on account of social and religious customs, were ever pent up in them. The whole bodies of the occupants of these tenements were always covered with a thick coating of flour and dust. Their throats and eyes naturally could not escape, thereby rendering their bodies feeble and weak.

The Punjab factories, when situated a long way from towns, generally provide accommodation for their wage-earners. Herein, the skilled workers naturally get a preferential treatment, as compared with unskilled hands. These tenement-rooms generally possess little or no ventilation. Ventilation implies the supplying of fresh air to a room for the purpose of improving its condition as regards the comfort and healthfulness of its occupants; and a system of ventilation comprises any arrangement of special apparatus for bringing about this result. Vitiated atmosphere lowers the vitality and thereby increases

the susceptibility to disease. It decreases both the physical and mental capacity for work. Impure air causes a feeling of weariness or drowsiness, and is usually accompanied by a dull headache. From this, one can learn the disastrous consequences of the absence of any ventilation for an overwhelmingly large majority of factory labourers.

These rooms generally vary between 8 ft. × 8 ft. × 8 ft. and 10 ft. × 10 ft. × 10 ft. in dimensions. In some cases they are very small. Some rooms have a verandah on one side. The verandah is sometimes covered to serve the purpose of a kitchen or a kitchen and lavatory side by side. They are, in certain cases, built back to back—an admittedly grave sanitary defect.

Thé workmen's rooms measure 11 ft. × 10 ft. × 10 ft. in a tannery at Shahdara, and 12 ft. × 12 ft. × 12 ft. in a carpet factory at Amritsar. In a factory in the Gurdaspur district, the general body of workmen are accommodated in one-room quarters which measure 12 ft. × 10 ft. × 12 ft. Some of the single room tenements in a mill at Amritsar measure 12 ft. × 10 ft. × 10 ft. while others are 10 ft. × 10 ft. × 10 ft. In a factory in the Lahore district, quarters for superior staff are good and comprise two rooms, 14 ft. × 14 ft. × 14 ft. each, with a small bathroom, kitchen and lavatory attached to them. The inferior quarters comprise one-room tenements, measuring about 10 ft. × 10 ft. × 10 ft. They are never whitewashed and are reserved for inferior staff and labourers. They are made of mud and their appearance, from within and without, is simply shocking.

The quarters, wherever specially built, are more often made of bricks than of mud. They generally comprise one room either with or without an open common yard. More often, the quarter is nothing but a single-room tenement.

Whatever the dimension of the quarters in the Punjab may be, it is a fact that they are extremely congested. On a rough average, three to four labourers live in a small room. But there are many cases in which six, seven or eight men may be herded together in a room 11 ft. × 10 ft. × 10 ft. In a factory in the Lahore district, I observed that all the unskilled hands—about seventy in number—were living eight in rooms 10 ft. × 10 ft. × 10 ft. The rooms had no ventilation and looked dark even in the broad daylight. Similar was the case of a

tannery in the Gujranwala district and of a factory in Rawalpindi which I visited in 1927.

Ventilation is provided by the Dhariwal Mills in the quarters and is probably adequate. But, as a common practice, the illiterate labourers paste over all openings with mud. This is my personal observation, and I think that it is due to their poverty and to their ignorance of hygienic principles—more especially to the former. They are poor and cannot go in for wool in winter. Not that alone. Their bedding even is not sufficient to protect them from cold at night. The result is that all holes are stuffed up with rags or pasted over with mud. The same condition continues even in summer when, it is believed, the closing up of ventilators keeps the rooms cool.

Our workers possess a remarkable power of adaptation. They raise little objection to dark and dingy quarters. I remember having actually lighted a lamp in broad daylight to examine the internal state of a few quarters at Lyallpur in 1920.

So much as regards workmen's quarters in the Punjab, built close to the mills. A very large number of labourers live in cities or villages. The condition in villages is no better, but there are some redeeming features of rural life, which are conspicuous by their absence in city slums.

The urban streets, haunted by our workmen, are generally narrow—some of them only four feet wide. The houses present a dull and dreary look. Some of them are situated in narrow alleys, others in confined courts which admit sadly too little sunlight and air, and which are often separated from the main street by dark covered passages three or four feet wide.

The streets in which the slums abound present a strange spectacle. Cows and buffaloes—owned by Gujars and others who live there—are often seen arrayed in a line. Their owners have no yards to accommodate them in and so tie them up with ropes in the streets. This adds immensely to the dirt and filth.* The windows of these city slums are generally dilapidated. The holes in the walls are stuffed with rags in winter. The following

* The sanitary condition of the interior parts of Amritsar and Lahore cities beggars description. An overwhelmingly large number of houses exhibit the usual characteristics of slums.

remarks made by the District Officer, Amritsar, in 1921 are very suggestive *:—" There are at this time nearly 4,000 regular labourers working in 79 industrial establishments in this city. Nearly 500 of these are permanent labourers, the others are constantly changing. The average number at normal times is 3,000 and rises to nearly 5,000 in the busy season. The labourers working in trade marts are generally unskilled. As for their housing conditions, permanent labourers are sometimes provided with free quarters by the factory-owners. Nearly all outside labourers have got free quarters; other labourers live in such houses, as they can afford to rent; skilled labourers generally living in healthier surroundings than the unskilled. A great number live in narrow lanes. Their social status is low; an ordinary *baboo* † getting Rs. 30 per mensem in an office claims superiority over a skilled labourer who is earning Rs. 100 monthly. The condition of unskilled labourers is still worse, the most fortunate among them get quarters to live in factories and mills; others hire common shops in batches of ten or twenty. The remaining are houseless and sleep their night away on platforms of closed shops."

This description suitably fits in with the condition of Jullundur, Lahore and Rawalpindi also. Many ordinary labourers are houseless and are seen lying down on the public roads at night. Their bed is the metalled pavement below and their shelter from cold and mosquitoes is the vast blue starry sky which hangs over us all.

Casual labourers go in for residential shops in an out-of-the-way corner, when no other accommodation is available. They live in batches, and these shops are as congested as the city-slums. A special city-building census was held in the Punjab in February, 1921. The enquiry was confined only to four cities—Lahore, Amritsar, Jullundur and Rawalpindi. A summary of its results is given below ‡:—

* Punjab Census Report for 1921, Vol. I, page 369.

† Clerk.

‡ Punjab Census Report, 1921, Vol. I, page 135.

No.	CITY	No. of buildings with an average per inhabited room of				
		Two persons or less than 2	Between 2 and 3 persons	Between 3 and 4 persons	Between 4 and 5 persons	More than 5 persons
1	Lahore ...	14,310	5,300	3,471	2,101	3,647
2	Amritsar ...	5,296	1,069	511	260	411
3	Jullundur ...	2,332	693	334	126	154
4	Rawalpindi ...	1,953	602	350	161	204

These figures relate to the whole urban population. The condition of factory-operatives was not examined separately, but they undoubtedly fall in the last three divisions of buildings.

The condition of Bombay is so miserable that it wants a detailed treatment by itself. The wage-earners in that city live in three main types of dwellings :—

(1) Sheds constructed with corrugated iron.

(2) 'Zavli' sheds, made of dry cocoanut leaves.

(3) 'Chawls,' or "buildings let in separate tenements." *

Corrugated iron sheds have been erected by the Bombay Trust and are of a semi permanent nature. Each line of sheds consists of about 12 rooms (10 ft. × 10 ft.) with a verandah three feet wide. These dwellings are very uncomfortable and present a horrible spectacle in some cases.† "Personal inspection of one of these leaves recollections which will not readily be forgotten. Entering the shed and passing down a dark narrow passage—so narrow that two persons could scarcely pass one

* Burnett-Hurst: Labour and Housing in Bombay (London, 1925), page 19.

† Ibid., pages 19 and 20.

another—one had to grope one's way to the doorways of the room. Upon peering into these, it was impossible to ascertain whether they were occupied or not. Not a ray of light penetrated them, and this at noon on a bright, sunny day. It was only on striking a match, that the rooms were found to be inhabited."

The 'Zavli' sheds are as inconvenient and are practically devoid of any sanitary arrangements. The 'Chawls' comprise either one room or a double room (otherwise famous as 'gallas'). They "differ considerably in appearance, construction and size; all have for their object the housing—one is almost tempted to use the expression "warehousing"—of large numbers of the labouring classes in as cheap a manner as possible." * These Chawls are of three different types. In the first class fall those dwellings which were originally constructed for one family, but which, owing to overcrowding of population, were converted into tenements. As Mr. Burnett-Hurst says: they are "among the most insanitary buildings in the city. 'Pestilential plague-spots' is by no means too strong an expression for them. No matter how graphic a pen picture is drawn, how vivid a description is given of existing conditions, it is impossible to convey to the reader any true conception of the actual state of affairs." † In the second category are those tenement blocks which have been built by private initiative and are generally two-storied. The rooms are usually 10 ft. × 10 ft. and are sometimes back to back and sometimes run parallel to one another. The light and air are more or less insufficient. The sanitary condition is bad. "The municipal rules require one W. C. for every five tenements, but this bye-law is by no means universally observed." ‡

The third type consists of tenements built by public bodies. "A modern chawl generally consists of a series of units, each comprising a room (with a floor space of 10 ft. × 12 ft.) and a front verandah 4 ft. 6 in. wide." § The verandah, which is partially closed, contains a "nahani" || and a "chula". ¶ Each room has two doorways, one giving access to the verandah and the other

* Burnett-Hurst: Labour and Housing in Bombay (London, 1925), p. 20.

† Ibid., page 23.

‡ Ibid., page 25.

§ Ibid., page 26.

|| Bathing place.

¶ Fire-place for cooking purposes.

to the central corridor ; in addition, the top of the wall between the room and the corridor is open and fitted with expanded metal to provide ventilation without affecting privacy. "The rooms and verandahs are provided with pegs and shelves of reinforced concrete for the storage of firewood and household goods." It is no doubt true that these chawls are much superior to anything that existed before, but they do not present an entirely satisfactory appearance. My personal experience shows that they leave much room for improvement in sanitation. Still, when all is said and done, the death-rate in these chawls is about one-quarter to that of the whole city.*

The chawls are rented at different rates. "The 'median'† rent for one room tenements was Rs. 3-8-0 per month, and for about 64 per cent of the tenements a rental of Rs. 3-0-0 to Rs. 3-8-0 was paid. In 1921–22, the predominant rents for single-rooms tenanted by working classes in Bombay ranged from Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 5-8-0, the most common rent being Rs. 3-12-0 per month. The rents charged in Improvement Trust Chawls vary from Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 13-8-0 per room per month ; they average Rs. 4-8-6."

These chawls are generally overcrowded, i.e. there are more than two persons to a room. The Bombay Labour Office Inquiries in 1921 revealed that about 95 per cent of the working class families in Bombay lived in single rooms, and this has been confirmed by my personal observation. "The average number of persons per room in Parel was 3.5."‡ It should be remembered that several families live in a single room in many cases. According to the census of 1921, there were more than 135 cases in which one room was occupied by six families or more.

The condition of Bombay chawls § tells heavily on both men and women—especially on the latter. Men usually sleep out of doors. Women sleep inside in the dark ill-ventilated rooms with

* *Vide* Annual Reports of the Bombay Improvement Trust.

† Burnett-Hurst : Labour and Housing in Bombay, page 28.

‡ Ibid., page 28.

§ Compare Bombay Industrial Disputes Committee Report (1922), page 52.

". . . An educated labour force would not tolerate the depressing conditions under which the general body of workers in Bombay are housed. . ."

their children and female lodgers, if any. The state of affairs becomes very annoying, when, in some cases, the men and women are both huddled together indiscriminately at night on the pavements of the city.

The chawls are usually two storeys high and afford little privacy and home-life. The amount of land that can be obtained for housing purposes is limited in Bombay, and has put obstacles in the way of the construction of one-storey buildings. Some attempts in this direction have no doubt been made and have borne very good results. One-storey buildings are comparatively fresh and clean, and provide for a greater amount of homeliness.

Ahmedabad also presents a strange spectacle. Here, "the stranger is impressed with a sense of innumerable masses of human beings moving hither and thither, and disappearing apparently into nowhere, only to make room for more people and more."* The town is congested—very congested—and dense and dusty atmosphere pervades all over. The types of dwellings vary from factory to factory. In a few places, small huts of brick, or mud, or even of plastered bamboo make their appearance and are used by casual workers. One-room tenements are greatly in evidence, and the bulk of working class families take shelter in them. "The workers live in tenements owned or taken on lease by their employers or by private landlords or in some cases in dwellings built by themselves on sites for which they pay rents. About 37 mills in Ahmedabad provide housing for their employees. Out of these, two mills give free accommodation to their Ramoshees, gate-keepers and night watchmen. The number of persons taking advantage of the housing provided is about 16 per cent of the total number of persons employed by these mills."† According to the Labour Office Enquiry of 1926, about 73 per cent of the families under investigation lived in one room tenements. This compares favourably with that of Bombay, where the percentage was 97. The following detailed statement ‡ which related to the number

* Kelman: Labour in India, page 147.

† Report of an Enquiry into working class family-budgets in Ahmedabad (Bombay, 1928), page 17.

‡ Ibid., page 18.

of rooms occupied according to income classes in the Ahmedabad Enquiry of 1926 will make an interesting study :—

Income-classes	Number of tenements with							
	One room	Two rooms	Three rooms	Four rooms	Five rooms and over	One hut	Imperfectly specified	All tenements
Below Rs. 20	15	1	...	...	...	1	...	17
Rs. 20 and below Rs. 30	114	20	2	...	1	7	2	146
,, 30 ,, ,, 40	149	17	7	2	2	4	1	182
,, 40 ,, ,, 50	160	43	10	4	...	3	...	220
,, 50 ,, ,, 60	117	28	7	3	1	1	...	157
,, 60 ,, ,, 70	38	25	5	5	...	...	...	73
,, 70 ,, ,, 80	27	15	2	1	...	...	...	45
,, 80 ,, ,, 90	16	7	6	1	2	...	...	32
Total ...	636	156	39	16	6	16	3	872
Percentage to Total ...	72.93	17.89	4.47	1.84	0.69	1.84	0.34	100.00

In a majority of cases, the number of occupants per tenement was 2, 3 or 4. The following table analyses tenements according to number of occupants in Ahmedabad*:—

* Report of an Enquiry into working class family-budgets in Ahmedabad (Bombay, 1928), page 18.

Number of Rooms per Tenement	Number of tenements of each class containing the following number of persons										Total	Percentage to Total
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
One room	169	156	135	88	51	23	8	2	2	2	636	72.93
Two rooms	35	26	35	26	17	9	6	1	...	1	156	17.89
Three rooms	3	10	9	7	6	2	1	...	...	1	39	4.47
Four rooms	1	5	2	3	3	...	...	2	...	...	16	1.84
Five rooms and over	1	1	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	6	0.69
One hut	2	6	2	3	2	...	1	...	...	...	16	1.84
Imperfectly specified	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	0.34
Total ...	211	205	187	128	80	34	16	5	2	4	872	100.00
Percentage to Total	24.20	23.51	21.44	14.68	9.17	3.90	1.84	0.57	0.23	0.46	100.00	...

A large majority of the families under enquiry in 1926 paid rent varying from Rs. 3 to Rs. 6. The average rent per family was Rs. 4-9-11, and the average floor space available for each person in the family was 47.36 square feet.

A special enquiry into the housing condition of Ahmedabad was completed by the Labour Office in 1926. It was then found that 45.6 per cent of the working class tenements possessed no windows, 29.5 per cent had one window, 11 per cent had 2 windows and the remaining had more than two. About 50 per cent of the workers used municipal privies. For water-supply, they used municipal taps in about 28 per cent cases. "Where private taps are available, in 33.6 per cent of the cases there is one tap for 8 or less than 8 tenements, in 7.4 per cent of the cases there is one tap for more than 8 but less than 16 tenements, and in 20.3 per cent of the cases one tap serves more than 16 tenements."*

The housing conditions in Sholapur are a little improved, as compared with Bombay and Ahmedabad. The city is not so congested and all the mills provide housing for their workers, about 12 per cent of whom live in buildings supplied by their employers. The majority of the workers inhabit two rooms or more. The number of rooms occupied according to income-groups by mill-workers in the Sholapur Enquiry of 1925 may be set forth in the following statement †:—

INCOME-GROUPS	NUMBER OF TENEMENTS WITH								Total
	One room	Two rooms	Three rooms	Four rooms	Five rooms	Six rooms	One hut	Two huts	
Below Rs. 20	36	30	2	...	...	...	7	...	75
Rs. 20 and below Rs. 30	98	85	7	2	...	...	15	...	207
" 30 " " 40	85	113	17	6	...	...	10	...	231
" 40 " " 50	53	94	29	4	...	...	5	...	185
" 50 " " 60	17	62	12	2	...	...	5	1	99
" 60 " " 70	5	29	9	4	1	...	1	...	49
" 70 " " 80	3	13	5	5	2	...	...	...	28
" 80 " " 90	...	11	14	2	...	1	...	...	28
All incomes ...	297	437	95	25	3	1	43	1	902
Percentage to Total ...	32.93	48.45	10.53	2.77	.33	.11	4.77	.11	100.00

* Report on an Enquiry into working class family-budgets in Ahmedabad (Bombay, 1928), pages 20 and 21.

† Report on an Enquiry into family-budgets of cotton mill workers in Sholapur City, Bombay, 1928, page 20.

In 44 cases, the families live in huts which are generally erected by workmen at their own cost. They however pay a small site rent to the proprietor. The figures above clearly indicate that house-room in Sholapur is more spacious than in Bombay and Ahmedabad. It is cheaper too. "Nearly 65 per cent of the families pay a monthly rent of less than Rs. 3 per month, 24 per cent pay more than Rs. 3 and less than Rs. 4 per month, and the rest pay more than Rs. 4 per month. The lower rents are no doubt due to less congestion in Sholapur, but they are also due to the fact that some employers let out buildings to their operatives at concession rents."*

The average monthly rent paid by the cotton mill workers in Sholapur was nearly Rs. 2-8-0. This is much less than the rent paid by the working classes in Bombay and Ahmedabad. The average rent in Bombay, according to the rent enquiry conducted by the Bombay Labour Office in 1923–24, comes to Rs. 5-0-2 per month per one-room tenement, while in Ahmedabad it comes to Rs. 4-6-1 per month for one-room tenements, according to the rent enquiry conducted there in 1926.

The health of the workers and their families is affected not only by their housing accommodation, but also by the available floor space. The average floor space per room, according to the Sholapur enquiry of 1925, was 92 square feet and the average floor space per individual was 36 square feet. The average floor space per room for the working classes in Bombay † is 104 square feet, and the floor space per individual is 24.7 square feet. Overcrowding, though less acute in Sholapur as compared with Bombay and Ahmedabad, is by no means rare. The following table ‡ clearly suggests this:—

* Report on an enquiry into family-budgets of cotton mill workers in Sholapur city (Bombay, 1928), page 20.

† See Report on an enquiry into working class budgets in Bombay (Labour Office, Bombay, 1923), page 25.

‡ Report on an enquiry into family-budgets of cotton mill workers in Sholapur city (Bombay, 1928), page 23.

Analysis of Tenements by Number of Occupants

Number of rooms per tenement	Number of tenements of each class containing the following number of persons											Total	Percentage to Total
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
One room	53	66	75	46	39	7	8	2	...	1	...	297	32.93
Two rooms	40	91	106	83	60	27	15	5	6	3	1	437	48.45
Three rooms	9	17	10	17	17	12	6	3	2	1	1	95	10.53
Four rooms	...	2	5	3	4	5	1	4	...	...	1	25	2.77
Five rooms	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	3	.33
Six rooms	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	.11
One hut	2	10	12	5	7	3	2	2	...	...	...	43	4.77
Two huts	...	...	...	...	..	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	.11
Total ...	104	186	208	154	127	57	33	16	8	5	4	902	100.00
Percentage to Total	11.53	20.62	23.06	17.07	14.08	6.32	3.66	1.77	.89	.56	.44	100.00	...

Nearly half of the mill-hand dwellings in Sholapur are of brick and cement, while the others are made of mud.

The crowded hovels of Cawnpore beggar description. Several of the lanes are so narrow "that a man has to turn sideways to pass through them."* The sanitation of the poor quarters is simply shocking. Many of the mill dwellings are much improved, but the congestion there is as great as perhaps in other parts of India. "One of the common instincts of humanity is that of a desire for family privacy. The single room with the open verandah in front does not lend itself to privacy. In one village out of three hundred and thirteen houses occupied by families, two hundred and forty-eight have been completely screened with gunny cloth, bamboo, reed or mud walls, and thirty-five have been partially enclosed. In other words, ninety houses have tried to create privacy for themselves. Efforts have been made from time to time to prevent the erection of these screens, but without success. Would it not be wise in planning future houses of this type to take this matter into consideration."? †

To turn now to Bengal. Howrah is a town of mills, as also of squalid dwellings, where the workers return to take their well-earned rest. Cholera, enteric fever and several other epidemics make their way in these surroundings with lightning rapidity, and the death-rate is consequently very high. The riverside mills afford a greater choice for the workers. Collections of huts spring up in and around the bazaars, owned mainly by sirdars (overseers). These are known in Bengal as bustis. The bustis may sometimes appear in open spaces of land, where they generally resemble the crude houses of the workers.

Many mill-owners in Bengal have also erected quarters for their workers. They are known as 'lines' and differ in design, sanitation and other things from factory to factory. The rent realised varies as well. Sometimes, the tenement-rooms are given free, but, more usually, a rent is charged which may vary from eight annas to two rupees and even more. The 'lines' may either be two-storied, or they may comprise only the ground-floor. In either case, they usually run parallel to one another

* Kelman: Labour in India, page 152. Quoted by Kelman from articles by Mr. Wiser, a Cawnpore Missionary.

† Ibid., pages 152 and 153. Quoted from Mr. Wiser's article.

with a paved road in between. Drains are provided on either side of the road, carrying refuse water to the main drain. But these drains may not be kept in proper repair. In the course of time, several of them get broken and choked with rubbish and debris. Some lines are no doubt very sanitary in every respect, but there are others which, by their unhealthy appearance, reflect very badly on the municipalities and the employers.

The Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur possesses about 275 bungalows and 5,290 *pucca* quarters for its European and Indian employees. The house accommodation does not meet the entire demand of the workers, and it is usual to find a quarter occupied by the tenant as also his relatives and friends. Approximately, 10,000 employees, out of a total of about 27,000 workers, may be said to be living in these quarters. The rents charged from the workers give a gross return of about 4 to 5 per cent on capital expenditure without providing for maintenance or repairs and are generally 30 to 60 per cent below the economic rent. The bungalows meant for the highly-paid superior staff have a properly fenced-in compound. All the quarters have a yard in front, and employees desirous of making a garden are allowed and encouraged to do so. The Tata Company also lets out plots for residential buildings to their workers. The terms are favourable, and the Company even advances money to them up to a maximum of 2/3rd of the value of the house. A nominal interest of 3 per cent is charged for the loan, which is repayable in easy instalments. The total number of *kutcha* houses built by the employees is about 3,000, out of which 800 houses have been built on the loan system. The total amount of money advanced in this way exceeds a lakh and a quarter.

Workmen's houses have in many cases uneven and uncemented floors, which are, of course, used to sit or lie on, as usually no furniture is used. City-slums are never whitewashed. An apology for whitewash exists in factory quarters and in dwellings (or chawls) erected by public bodies, but this too vanishes when, in winter and rains, firewood and charcoal are burnt inside.

Waste water is often thrown inside. Pools of water in this way collect, gradually percolating through into the damp and unsavoury soil below. The windows and doors are usually kept closed and the labourers remain pent up in their cells after the

factory hours. There is very little privacy and no home-life. The rooms are used for all purposes : the few household utensils (earthen and metal), clothes, the beds and the firewood are all stored there.

These houses do not generally possess any plinth—in some cases, they are much below the level of the public roads. Thus, water collects in pools in rains outside, and an important problem of drainage is how to get rid of the surface water during the monsoon.

No separate baths are generally provided for workers. Men and women go to the nearest tank or well, however dirty and unwholesome it may be. Muslim women take their baths in their rooms. The need for baths can hardly be over-emphasized. They are an absolute daily necessity in a tropical country and should be provided by local municipalities or the factory-owners as soon as possible. Baths or *nahanis* have been provided in some of the modern Bombay chawls, but they have been greatly misused—a practice which can only be removed slowly by education.

Lighting is generally conspicuous by its absence in the neighbourhood of mills and mill-quarters. Lighting arrangements should be undertaken by the municipality, or the factory, whichsoever be responsible for it.

The habits of our uneducated workmen are usually unhygienic. They throw household refuse and filth into the open yard in front, or cast it from the window (if any) into the public street. If the quarters were visited before and after occupation, the difference would be at once visible.

Some of the Muslim women remain behind the veil. The factory-owners and the public bodies generally take no notice of their religious scruples and erect no enclosure walls for them. The result is that the workmen themselves make small enclosures either with the help of stray bricks or gunny bags, whichever be easily procurable. When these two things are not available, a long sheet of patched-up rags is hung over the doorway. The consequences are self-evident. The health of women, as also of their husbands, is impaired. The latrines in such cases are located just close to the door, and the stench thereby produced impairs the health of residents. It is necessary

under the conditions that due notice should be taken of the religious sentiments of labourers.

There is no system of through ventilation in working-men's quarters in general. Its absence affects the physique of workers. Their health is very indifferent. Their children grow feeble and look pale and half starved. The area adjoining their quarters is not generally kept clean, and stagnant pools of water are often found there. These have practically no outlet, except when they overflow their banks in heavy rains. They are generally covered with a thick greenish brown scum and, during the scorching heat of summer, give out an unpleasant odour. These places are the breeding centres of mosquitoes, including those which carry malaria. The poor wage-earners and their children fall an easy prey to it, thus becoming feeble and timid in body and mind.

Such drawbacks can be promptly put an end to by a proper system of drainage, and we cannot conceive of a more dangerous agent to the health and vitality of labourers than such epidemics. The trouble does not end here, for I have often noticed that small children play in these pools, and it is therefore no wonder to hear of such a huge infantile mortality in India.

The noteworthy feature is the inability of municipalities to come up to the mark. Several cases of dirt and filth gathering round the quarters of workmen have been referred to them, but practically very little has been done to remove these legitimate causes of complaint. I happened to look into the office-records of some mills during my tour of India, and was greatly struck to find the indifference displayed by the municipal committees and district boards to the representations made by mill-owners on behalf of their workers in matters of health and welfare. Sanitation is one of our foremost needs, and any reform taken in this direction is sure to be accompanied by good results.

The lavatories attached to the mill-dwellings are insufficient almost everywhere and do not generally possess cemented floors. These are at times situated very close to the dwelling area and are not provided with drains for the outlet of water which, dirty and impure as it already is, is absorbed in the earth thus producing an unhealthy atmosphere all round. Sinks are sometimes provided, but they are never regularly cleaned.

But this is not all. There are instances in which no provision whatsoever is made for latrines. The workers are asked to go far into the open fields—sometimes at a distance of a mile and a half—to ease themselves. This gives rise to hook-worm disease, so noxious to human beings. The employers alone are not to blame for it. The city-fathers, who stand forth as their representatives, while away their precious time in vain communal bickerings, attempting nothing, achieving nothing. Public lavatories and urinals should be set up at convenient places very early. The present system of latrines is bad and unwholesome. Septic tanks are far superior and should be substituted instead. They are known in many parts of India. The device is simple and economical, and I look forward to the day, when it will be established all over. The sea-ports, on the other hand, could easily proceed with the flush-system.

One great need of our workmen is pure water. They are not sometimes within easy approach of tap-water, when it exists. Well-water is commonly used by them, but it is not so sanitary and pure. Wells, again, are not kept clean and it often happens that pools of stagnant water are found adjacent to them. In this way, any percolation that takes place is bound to find its way through the old brick-work into the wells. It is but natural that, under such conditions, the terrible epidemics that invade the country should take a heavy toll of the lives of people, living in insanitary environments.* The present generation of workers

* Compare the resolution of the All-India conference of medical research workers (1926) as quoted by the Linlithglow Commission :—

"This Conference believes that the average number of deaths resulting every year from preventible disease is about five to six millions, that the average number of days lost to labour by each person in India from preventible disease is not less than a fortnight to three weeks in each year, that the percentage loss of efficiency of the average person in India from preventible malnutrition and disease is not less than 20 per cent, and that the percentage of infants born in India who reach a wage-earning age is about fifty, whereas it is quite possible to raise this percentage to eighty or ninety. The Conference believes that these estimates are understatements rather than exaggerations, but, allowing for the greatest possible margin of error, it is absolutely certain that the wastage of life and efficiency which results from preventible disease costs India several hundreds of crores each year. This Conference believes that it is possible to prevent a great proportion of this waste at a cost which is small in comparison with the expenditure."

" The recent census shows that the position in India is one of great emergency. This Conference recognises that the problem is very complicated and involves

is, in short, very badly housed. Its vitality is low and, consequently, its power of resistance is small. I am afraid, the indifference of the public and the Government will result in a gradual decay of the working population.

It is a fact that wherever insanitary conditions prevail, a high death-rate is prevalent among persons of all ages. It is further recognised that "infant mortality is the most sensitive index we possess of social welfare and of sanitary administration." * The Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India harps on a similar tune when, in his annual report for 1922 (pages 88 and 89), he says :—

"Infant mortality is a sensitive index of the health conditions, especially as regards general sanitation which requires attention, if any real influence on infant mortality and on the health of a nation is to be exercised. That close on a quarter of the total deaths should be in infants is a clear indication that a clean environment—the first essential of health—is neglected. Infants respond to the nature of the environment more readily than human beings at later periods of life, and a rise in the percentage of infant death to total mortality means that the epidemic diseases which affect adults to a greater degree have been less prevalent."

The following figures relate to the death-rate per mille of children under one year in the Indian provinces and the European countries :—

European Countries.		Indian Provinces.	
Sweden ...	... 84	United Provinces	... 352
Scotland ...	... 116	Bengal	... 270
England and Wales	... 127	Madras ...	... 199
France	... 132	Bihar and Orissa	... 304
Hungary ...	... 207	Punjab	... 306
Germany ...	... 186	Bombay ...	... 320

The figures for India are rather alarming and are attributable to several causes. The general poverty of the people, their early

not only medical research, but also questions of public health, medical relief, medical education, propaganda and social and economic considerations."

Royal Commission on Agriculture in India—(Calcutta, 1928), pages 481 and 482.

* Report by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board (England and Wales) on mortality during the first five years of life (Cd—5263).

marriages, their illiteracy and ignorance of elementary hygienic principles, the lack of medical care and nursing, the industrial employment of married women and last, but not least, the overcrowding of poor people in bad and insanitary quarters account for the present state of affairs. The association between housing and infant mortality is certainly very great, and the figures given below point this out clearly. They relate to Bombay only:—*

—	Births in 1921		Infant deaths in 1921		Infant mortality per 1,000 births registered			
	Nos. 00's	P.C.	Nos. 00's	P.C.	1918	1919	1920	1921
1 room and under ...	150	76	94	87	767	831	631	828
2 rooms	20	10	6	6	499	565	304	322
3 rooms	4	2	1	1	375	358	295	191
4 rooms or more ...	3	1.5	1	1	239	189	289	133
Road-side	25	.1	1	.1	133	543	400	485
Hospitals	20	10	6	6	79	112	309	190

Our women are generally attended in their period of confinement by *dais*—indigenous midwives—who have had no regular training in their profession. The *dais* are unclean and unhygienic in their habits. "Clothed in voluminous dirty garments, their arms are decorated with innumerable glass bangles; their fingers covered with shoddy rings end in dirty finger nails. Their apparatus consists chiefly of a large tobacco pipe of the *hooka* variety, a dirty old knife, and a small oil lamp the oil of which serves indiscriminately both for burning and oiling the hands for vaginal examination. A few scraps of rags or old wool pulled out of a mattress and some string complete the outfit."†

This, then, is the real situation, and serious attempts are necessary to bring it under control. The provision of medical assistance to women in India was undertaken by the Countess of

* Burnett-Hurst: Labour and Housing in Bombay, page 41. Quoted from the annual report of the Health Officer, Bombay.

† Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India for the year 1920—(Calcutta, 1922), page 60.

Dufferin as early as 1885. It had for its main object the training of women as hospital assistants and midwives. The Countess of Dufferin's Fund has been doing excellent work, and was supplemented in 1904 by the Victoria Memorial Scholarship Fund started by the late Lady Curzon. Its object is to train local *dais* to enable them to carry on their work in the light of up-to-date medical knowledge. Progress in this direction has been rather slow, but its utility is being daily recognised by all. The Lady Chelmsford League for maternity and child welfare was founded in 1920 with a sum yielding an income of over half a lakh of rupees. The League maintains health schools and health centres and carries on educational propaganda through the publication of leaflets, pamphlets and posters in various languages. The Indian Red Cross Society has been established since 1921 and aims at child welfare and the improvement of public health. These central institutions are doing useful work, but they have as yet only touched the fringe of the problem, which so greatly affects the masses in the country. Their funds are small and, unless supported by local bodies, they cannot be expected to re-organise the indigenous midwifery practice in India.

Voluntary help seems badly in demand. But social agencies cannot work their way up unaided. It is the duty of the Government and the local boards to pay immediate attention to this question and grant liberal financial aid.

It may be of interest to note that England was confronted with the same problem as late as the end of the 19th century. With the advent of the present century, persistent efforts have been made to bring down the rate of infant mortality. It is satisfactory to note that these have succeeded admirably. At the end of the 19th century, the average death-rate of children below one year of age in England and Wales was more than 150 per thousand births. Between 1901 and 1910, the rate of infant mortality went down to 128. By the end of the year 1915, it stood at 110. It went still further down to 90 in 1916–1920. It was 75 in 1924 and 1925, and 70 in 1926. The results attained are no doubt very commendable, and it is expected that the rate of infant mortality will be still further reduced in future years.*

* *Vide* Annual Reports of the Ministry of Health in England.

Improved sanitation, combined with other causes, has brought about a corresponding decrease in the average annual death-rate in England. Whereas in 1871-80 it stood at 21.4 per 1,000 living, it has steadily gone down in each succeeding year so much so that it stood at 13.8 per 1,000 living in 1919.*

The physical welfare of expectant mothers and born babies is one of our foremost duties. The work can be undertaken with success by Local Governments and voluntary agencies and should proceed on the following lines:—

(1) There should be a sufficient supply of maternity homes for the normal confinement of women-workers who live in very ugly and insanitary quarters or who cannot be confined in their homes. Sometimes, more than one family lives in the same room, and it is advisable that expectant mothers, living under such circumstances, should be removed to a maternity home during their period of confinement.

(2) There is no provision of home-nursing for ailments connected with pregnancy and for the diseases of infants of workers. Early attention to this is needed.

(3) Sometimes, the expectant mother is penniless, and this is generally the case amongst women-workers in factories. In such cases, sufficient nourishment should be provided for them, as well as for the poor nursing mothers.

(4) A large number of lady-doctors should be appointed in different areas and entrusted with the task of extending the maternity and child welfare programmes.

Midwifery service should also be very greatly extended, so that each woman may be in a position to avail herself of a trained midwife in her confinement.

This is not all. Maternity schemes and child welfare work are very useful indeed, but no substantial progress is possible without a sanitary home-life. Sanitary houses will improve the physical and mental outlook of our workers, and lay the foundation of true national happiness.

Public health is one of our foremost needs, but it is further partly dependent on good houses. I have observed that the

* First Annual Report of the Ministry of Health, 1919-20 (England); page 43. It should be remembered that the birth-rate and the death-rate have both declined in England. The average annual birth-rate in 1871-80 was 35.4 per 1,000 living. It stood at 18.5 in 1919.

accommodation for factory-workers is limited, and is bad and insanitary. The workers come from distant provinces in industrial centres like Bombay, Calcutta and Ahmedabad. They speak different languages and groups of them have sometimes very little in common. Under these conditions, it is clearly the duty of the employers to provide healthy accommodation for them.

But this is only one side of the picture. The motives of the employers in building quarters are manifold. They not only aspire for a continuity of labour, but are also anxious to secure complete control over it. The supervision is thereby so keen and inquisitive that it involves a real hardship on the labourers. The power of expulsion is exercised to their detriment, and the landlordism of employers, instead of being a boon, assumes a horrible and ghastly appearance. It is a weapon which cuts both ways. It may prove a blessing in disguise under broad-minded employers, but it may as well be fatal, especially to the growth and development of Indian trade-unionism, when handled by mischievous persons.

I am, however, of opinion that factory-owners should provide sanitary quarters for their labourers, as far as possible. On the other hand, they cannot be forced to do so by law: compulsion in this direction would be unjust and undesirable, the more so as it has never probably been exercised anywhere in the world. It must be borne in mind that we live in a tropical country, and insanitary houses here can wreak a far greater havoc than in a temperate or a cold climate. An improvement in houses can be brought about in one of the following ways:—

(1) The Local Governments may float loans and build quarters handing them over to the workmen at a reasonable rent.

(2) Or, alternatively, the Government may finance the factory-owners and philanthropic institutions at a reasonable rate of interest and encourage them to provide sanitary accommodation for workers. It can render further assistance by giving land free, as is often done in the case of private individuals. Or, it may buy land and hand it over for the building of workers' quarters on long lease.

Owing to great congestion in urban centres, it is essential that the Government should have some control in future over the location of industrial establishments and their general housing

plans. These should be thoroughly scrutinised before factories are established.

The educated labourers are opposed to the creation of landlord employers. They do not seem to have benefited much by them in Bombay. They fear, and rightly too in some cases, that they would lose their independence of action in the event of a strike. Their Lahore brethren were turned out bag and baggage at a moment's notice in the great North-Western Railway strike of 1920, and they still cherish the bitter memories of that historic event.

But the old days have rolled by, and it is difficult—nay, impossible—to repeat the atrocities of the past. Trade-unionism will grow slowly and steadily, and the landlordism of employers may in the long run serve useful purposes. They should be legally prohibited from expelling workers from their quarters in the case of a strike.

I personally think that the above two schemes can go hand in hand. Let me emphasize that our workers stand badly in need of good houses—let the agency for their construction be what it may. "Good houses mean the possibility of home-life, happiness and health; bad houses spell squalor, drink, disease, immorality and crime, prisons and asylums in which we seek to hide away the derelicts of society that are largely the result of society's own neglect. . . . . ." *

Suitable accommodation will enable labourers to live with their families, which will, in turn, exercise a healthy influence on their morals. Their attendance in factories will become steadier, thereby adding to their efficiency and creating a permanent labour class. †

* Sir George Lloyd & Hon'ble Edward Wood: The Great Opportunity, London, 1918), page 82.

† Indian Industrial Commission: Minutes of Evidence, 1916–18. Vol. I, page 66. Evidence of the Hon'ble Mr. L. P. Watson, President of the Upper India Chamber of Commerce:—

"I have noted, however, with feelings of extreme satisfaction and it has been noted by other employers of labour, that the comparative cleanliness and orderliness in their home-lives which has been secured to a percentage of the workmen by the erection of model villages has been reflected in their work, and I am very sure that the skill and efficiency of the labourer is to a very great extent dependent upon healthy, cleanly and orderly home-surroundings, whatever his caste or creed may be."

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The economic condition of factory operatives in India has been described in the foregoing chapters. It has also been shown how initial attempts at labour legislation have been made by the Government. The much-talked-of-harmony between the employers and the employed in the nineteenth century exists no more. The condition of the latter is still far from being satisfactory. Malnutrition, lack of education, insanitary housing, insufficient and inefficient medical attendance and bad working conditions have resulted in their physical and mental degeneration.

It must not be supposed that factory legislation, as it stands, is quite perfect. The present Act applies to premises wherein mechanical power is used and wherein twenty, or more than twenty, labourers are at work. Section 2 of the Indian Factories Amendment Act of 1922 authorises Local Governments to extend the operation of the Act to any factory, in which not less than ten persons are working, whether mechanical power is used or not. The provisions of this section have been partly applied to cotton ginning factories, ice-factories and the like. But there are a number of unregistered factories which employ hundreds of workmen without using any mechanical power. Carpet factories are an instance in point. Their general condition can better be imagined than described. The defective sanitation, the unclean *kutcha* floors and the dirty yards, all tell on the health and physique of the operatives. The workmen and apprentices are also excessively worked with sometimes no weekly day of rest. They labour from sunrise to sunset, and more than 90 per cent suffer from stomach troubles and eye-weaknesses, due to the strain of the work and its usual prolongation and sedentary nature. No reform has yet been made in the sitting posture of the craftsmen while at work, although some measures in this direction can be effectively employed. The old conditions continue. Children of ages varying from six years and upward are employed as apprentices, and are kept in the work-rooms all day alternately working and resting.

The carpet factories afford no shelter in summer, when the piercing rays of the sun fall on the workmen through un-enclosed archways. The extremes of cold in winter do their work relentlessly in the northern and north-west provinces. The workman, clad as he is in his thin summer clothes, is exposed to the biting cold. He is not at rest even in the rainy season : the monsoon showers sometimes disturb him at his work. Thus, our carpet-manufacturer's life is one of continual hardship.

It is surprising that the Local Governments have not yet seen their way to bringing carpet factories under the Act. Similarly, bad conditions prevail in several other unregistered factories. Is it not thus desirable that the Factory Act should be extended to all premises wherein ten, or more than ten, persons are at work? Section 2 of the Indian Factories Act is clear on this point, and its application in such cases is certainly useful.

The inspection staff is at present not adequate to cope with registered factories—a fact which has prevented Local Governments from extending the Factories Act. Here and there, when glaring abuses are detected time after time, Local Governments declare premises not using mechanical power, whether employing 20 labourers or less, as factories. It has been observed that some factory-owners deliberately keep the number of their employees under 20 with a view to escape inspection. In other cases, small power-machines have been removed to achieve the same end. In a recent report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for the Bengal presidency, it is pointed out how a registered printing and book-binding factory dispensed with the use of motive power to avoid compliance with the provisions of the Factories Act. All the same, this place employed about 80 children.

The undue exploitation of labour in unregistered factories is an established fact. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that we should increase the inspection staff and put a stop to the present evil tendencies of several of our factory-owners.

Besides the extension of the Factory Act, several other measures are necessary for the benefit of the workers. In 1927, the International Labour Conference adopted two Draft Conventions asking for a compulsory system of sickness insurance for the agricultural, industrial, commercial and domestic workers in

the different countries of the world. Their provisions, it should be understood, included cash benefits for a minimum period and certain medical benefits. They stipulated that the funds for the purpose should be obtained by compulsory contribution from the insured persons and their employers and that a contribution by the State should be optional. "The migratory character of industrial and other labour, the anxiety of the labourer to go back to his village and his relations when he falls seriously ill rather than submit himself to treatment on Western lines in hospitals at industrial and other centres; the want of qualified medical practitioners in sufficient number willing to take up the role of the country practitioners in Western countries, the existence of indigenous system of medicine; the opposition of the workers themselves to any system involving compulsory deductions from their pay, and the absence of self-governing institutions like properly organised trade-unions through which the insurance could be administered,"* forced the Government to move for a rejection of the Draft Conventions when they were taken up for discussion in the Legislative Assembly on the 27th March, 1928. It is indeed true that the Draft Conventions covered a wide field, but it never implied that an attempt should not be made within the manageable compass of factories. Moreover, some of the above arguments were exaggerated while others were not convincing.

Labour in India is migratory to an extent, but the Draft Conventions imply that contributions should be made by the employers as well as the employees, and also by the Government. "What the compulsory insurance system requires is that the contributions should be paid. If the contributions for compulsory insurance are paid by the employers and the Government; at least those two parties are not migratory, and they can always go on paying the compulsory insurance contributions. The only migratory element is the labourer and, if he wants to keep his claim to the insurance, he will go on paying his contribution to the insurance fund."† The non-existence of properly constituted trade-unions cannot stand in the way of a compulsory insurance

* Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. I, No. 36 (Delhi, 1928), pages 2063 and 2064.

† *Vide* Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. I, No. 36 (Delhi, 1928). Remarks by Mr. N. M. Joshi, while speaking on the motion.

since the Draft Conventions provide for the management of a fund even by the State in such cases.

It was reasons like these which led Mr. N. M. Joshi to move that the application of Draft Conventions for the present be confined to workers working in factories and mines and on organised and large-scale plantations. The motion was negatived but the Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath, on behalf of Government, promised to consult Local Governments in the matter. Labour is growing from a national to an international importance and very much more will have to be done to meet needs which are met elsewhere by such measures as poor law, minimum wage law, old age pensions and insurance against sickness and unemployment. The betterment of the condition of workers is a duty of the State, the social workers and the employers, and it is hoped that they will all rise to the occasion and display a practical interest in the welfare of the masses. In this connection, I must sound a note of warning to the employers who generally happen to be indifferent towards workers. They are very hard taskmasters and look mainly to their own gain, dismissing the employees when their profits begin to shrink. . . . "When an employer gauges his industrial success by the amount of profit he makes, he reminds me of a man who measures the perfection of his car by the amount of lubricating oil required to keep it running. There is no advantage whatever, but actual waste, in using more lubricating oil than need be. Equally, there is no advantage to the community at all, but actual injury, in any profit being more than bare minimum that is required to keep the machine going. In future, we shall judge a business by its efficiency in production. We do not estimate the achievements of a doctor by the amount of his fees, but by the extent of his cures. Similarly, the business-man will be judged by the efficient fulfilment of his function of production, and not by his profits which are merely the lubricating oil allowed him at present but which, in the interests of efficiency, must be reduced to a minimum." *

The factory-owners must realise their partnership with the workers, and do the best they can to help them. They must steer clear of the storm which beset the Western employers

* Sidney Webb: The Root of Labour Unrest—An address to Employers and Managers, 1919.

during the last seventy years and which they are now trying to ward off by social work and welfare schemes.

The recurrence of strikes during the last few years has been more or less on a gigantic scale. The average labourer has become somewhat conscious of his position only of late. Still it is impossible for a superficial observer to know all that he thinks. A brief interview, or even a cursory talk, is not enough to reach the depth of his feelings. He has long been under the oppression of petty officials. In his rural capacity, he has been kept in dread by the patwari, the naib-tahsildar, the tahsildar, the ubiquitous policeman and others. He has developed a reticent nature and suspects all investigators at the start. Little by little, he gives out his mind but, even then, it is very difficult to collect all the data necessary for our purpose.

The chief difficulty of our wage-earners is that very little or nothing at all is left to them after the bare necessaries of life have been paid for. In an appreciably large number of cases, debts are incurred with a far-off hope of repayment. Poverty—grinding poverty—is in short their main problem.

Some of the habits of our workers are wasteful and uneconomical and it is necessary that the lessons of self-help, thrift and co-operation should be imparted to them. This is possible through the organisation of co-operative stores which can be safely held up as instruments of social reform.

The progress of co-operation in India has been only one-sided. Our activities in the field of co-operation are mainly confined to the credit branch almost to the exclusion of several other branches equally useful, if not more. Every branch of co-operation has its own valuable advantages. If the genuine co-operative spirit with an inculcation of self-help, identity of interests and such other virtues is attained, there is nothing lost in my opinion by the extension of credit societies. The development of other forms of co-operation is another step in our economic reconstruction and advancement.

The retail co-operative stores deal primarily in distributive trade. They meet the requirements of the members and supply pure and unadulterated goods at reasonable prices (generally market), distributing the profits thereby made in proportion to the purchase of each member. Slowly and gradually, these

retail stores can be federated in National Wholesale Stores, eliminating still further the profits of middlemen. The retail co-operative stores can pool their demands through this wholesale organisation and reach the manufacturers direct.

The Consumers' Movement has been of great help in England. It has actually tended towards the reduction of prices and helped in the amelioration of economic conditions. Under competition from Consumers' Societies, the private traders have been forced to bring down their prices. "But the indirect and unconscious control exercised by the Co-operative Movement is far more extensive than this and far greater than is generally recognised, as is shown by the extremely valuable investigation made by the Co-operative Section of the International Labour Office and published in 1926. To give only one of the examples mentioned in it—a test carried out by the Co-operative Society of the Orne (Normandy). The prices of some thirty articles of common consumption were noted on the same day at small grocers' shops, multiple stores and a large Paris firm at different places in which the Society had opened shops, and compared with those of the Society. On the day the Society was opened, the prices charged by the private traders averaged 31 per cent above those of the Co-operative Society. Five months later, they were only 22 per cent higher; six months later they were only 11 per cent higher. But on the latter date, they were still 30 per cent higher in the two chief towns of the district where the Society did not open." *

This influence on the prices of articles is very far-reaching. Co-operative stores lower prices for members and thereby add to their purchasing power. In other words, they are tantamount to an increase of wages.

It should be remembered that Trade-unionism and Co-operation are complementary to each other. Whereas the former raises the standard of living of workers by increasing wages, the latter adds to it still further by lowering down the prices of articles. The two are necessary adjuncts of each other and can work hand in hand.

* W. E. A. Outlines of Co-operation by A. Honara Enfield. (Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 1927), page 19.

Co-operative stores, when started amongst our factory-workers, will prove a boon to them. But they must be supplemented by co-operative credit institutions. It is no doubt true that the turnover of labour is high in our factories, but, as our conditions improve, this tendency to shift from place to place will surely receive a check. As labour settles down, the different workers will be bound together into a stronger union. There will then be enough scope for the organization and development of co-operative credit institutions. The Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur encourages their formation amongst their employees to relieve them from the clutches of the Kabuli money-lenders. At present, about 21 such societies have been formed. All are being run independently by their committees, but the Company keeps an eye on them to prevent fraud or mismanagement.

The goal of our political destiny has been definitely outlined as 'responsible Government,' and it is up to us to train people in self-governing institutions. The vast field of co-operation and trade-unionism offers an inestimable opportunity for the social worker.* These societies offer an unequalled training ground for self-government in the best and truest sense. They are perfectly democratic. The members are called upon to exercise their vote with proper caution. They watch and safeguard the interests of their society and learn to subordinate personal interests to general weal, to form judgments outside the routine of their daily lives, and to accept the rule of the majority.

Co-operation and unionism are very allied in certain respects. Their aim and ideal are to uplift the lives of workers. Even social reforms may be achieved by mutual consent as by checking extravagance by the prohibition of alcohol, by levying penalties for gambling and by imparting education for the raising of mental outlook.

Our workers are not trained from their early life into one particular task as a means of livelihood. They lack permanence, the more so as the factory conditions present a dreary outlook. They do not generally enjoy the benefit of a provident fund or of a pension scheme. They live from hand to mouth, and, when they die, their dependents carry on a wretched existence. It is

* See Author's "Co-operative Movement in the Punjab". Aligarh, 1923. Pages 85 and 86.

thus desirable that all the well-established factories should start provident funds for permanent workers on the lines now in vogue in the Municipal and District Board Service.

For a very large number of labourers, employment is unstable and uncertain. Its continuity may extend from one day to a few years. As Lescohier says, "unemployment undermines his physique, deadens his mind, weakens his ambitions, destroys his capacity for continuous, sustained endeavour, induces a liking for idleness and self-indulgence, saps self-respect and the sense of responsibility . . . . . . sends him to work worried and underfed, plunges him in debt." * Under such conditions, a labourer can never attain efficiency. Security of work directly conduces to efficiency, and no substantial results can be achieved without it.

The uncertain conditions of work in India breed disloyalty in the worker. Everything is regulated from the cash nexus point of view and the interests of workers are often trampled under foot. Under these circumstances, it is foolish to talk of the harmony of interests between the employers and the employees. The great gulf, which seems to separate the employer and the employee, can be bridged to a great extent if factory conditions improve. Lord Chelmsford thus expressed himself in 1920 in opening the Central Legislature† :—

"I would earnestly impress upon employers the necessity for sympathetic consideration of the claims of labour. It has too often proved the case that employers, after a long and ruinous struggle, have been forced to concede claims that they might have allowed with honour and with profit as soon as they were presented . . . . Workers are beginning to demand not merely the right to live in comfort, but a living interest in their work. This is a claim that must be taken seriously, and I see no reason why we should not make our new start abreast of the most advanced European countries. So long as Indian industry was organised on a small scale, the close personal contact between the master and each of his men secured intimate, if not harmonious, relations. With the inevitable growth of great factories, this contact has become impossible, and there is

* Lescohier: The Labour Market. New York, 1919, page 107.

† Proceedings of the Legislative Council in India, Part II; 1919-20; 20th August, 1920, pages 9 and 10.

a tendency to allow the bond between employer and employed to become a purely commercial one. It is essential that machinery should be devised which will re-establish under modern conditions personal contact and good understanding."

The worker should not be looked upon as a tool, but as a human being. The average employer in the West has realised the importance of this point and is now doing his best to afford the employees an opportunity of making themselves heard and of influencing his policy. The mechanism devised to accomplish this object is the 'Works Committee,' which is now looked upon as an essential element of success in industry. The Works Committee can help to organise labour. Our factory-labourers, as I have repeatedly pointed out, are very backward in every respect, and an impetus is needed to awaken them to the realisation of their helpless condition. The Works Committee can undoubtedly discharge this function very efficiently. It is a pleasure to note that some of the advanced factory-owners in India have taken this experiment in hand. In a few instances, the Works Committees have actually put a check on the oppressiveness and bribery of the overseers. The first Works Committee in India was set up by Mr. C. T. Allen at Cawnpore, and this noble precedent has been followed at Jamshedpur and some other places. The idea is pre-eminently suited for the Indians and is expected to bear good results.

Uncertainty of employment exists all over the world, especially in the West. It is responsible for a large amount of economic waste and it is the realisation of this weakness that has led the Western reformers to come to the rescue of the workers by several ingenious devices—by old-age pensions, by insurance against unemployment, sickness and accidents. But where these do not exist, trade-unions take the place of the State and stand by the worker in his hour of need. He is looked after to some extent in the periods of sickness and unemployment.

Trade-unionism is in its infancy in India. Poverty is rampant. Beggary has assumed huge proportions, and factory-labour is groaning under several hardships. In these circumstances, a major part of the duty of reform falls on the social workers, more especially the employers. The latter are, on an average, very harsh towards the workers. They have still much to learn

from the Western capitalists. One example will do. In the railway strike of 1919 in England, the share-holders issued the following statement* to the press :—

" We, the undersigned, being share holders or beneficiaries through shares in Companies, wish to state publicly that we are convinced that the claims of the workers to wages making it possible for them to live a full and free life come before the claims of share-holders to dividends. We will therefore support such a re-organisation of the present industrial system as shall bring about the highest good of the workers and the best interests of the community, and are prepared to accept whatever personal loss shall arise through such re-organisation."

At present, there is no system in vogue in India whereby surplus labour in one part may be shifted to areas of greater demand. In consequence, there may be dearth in some parts and plethora in other parts at one and the same time. Thus, Industrial Labour Bureaus should be started by the Government in every division in the different provinces, being linked up in their turn into an Industrial Labour Department for every province.

But an Industrial Labour Bureau may be a source of danger. It may be instrumental in supplying cheap labour to some favoured employers. It may also help in breaking a strike by importing the services of outside labourers. Hence, strong trade-unionism seems to be a necessary adjunct of a labour bureau.

This does not mean that initial steps should not be taken towards the creation of labour bureaus and Federated Labour Departments for the provinces. Trade-unionism will grow slowly and steadily, and their select officials, as also the representatives of the employers, may easily be co-opted on the bureaus. A labour bureau cannot succeed if its duties are relegated to a clerk who sits down and prepares a list of unemployed. Competent persons should be appointed to study the wants of each division and arouse trust and confidence in all concerned.

The Provincial Labour Departments should be federated into a National Employment Service controlled by the Government of India. England and Canada are the only two countries which have a National Employment Service. Germany helps and

* Quoted by Wadia and Joshi : Wealth of India, page 358.

subsidizes local organisations. The Federal Employment Service in the United States of America took its birth during the last war. These organisations have, one and all, been accused of favouritism. This may be true to a degree, but it is a fact that they have rendered valuable service on the whole. They act as a mitigating factor in the unemployment situation of their respective countries.

At present, the Government of India, in its Department of Labour and Industries, collects information relating to general industrial unrest. The Bengal presidency possesses an Industrial Intelligence Officer, discharging almost the same functions. A Labour Bureau exists in Bombay. It has an organ of its own, where the results of its activities are duly published. The movements of food prices, the index-numbers and other relevant facts appear in the Bombay Labour Journal from time to time. The investigations of the Bureau have appeared in the form of some reports. There is a Labour Commissioner in Madras. Since 1919, a Board of Economic Inquiry has been instituted in the Punjab. It has two sections—rural and urban—and it held its first sitting in December, 1919. It was then unanimously decided that the Board should:—

(1) lay down lines of economic investigations,

(2) co-ordinate the results of economic inquiries,

(3) encourage and direct economic study and research and

(4) publish economic material.

The Board consists of 26 members—ex-officio and nominated—and has of late been declared a non-official body. The rural section has already published some results of its inquiries. The urban section has not much to its credit, although it is now showing signs of increased activity. Some industrial investigators have already submitted their observations on labour in the province, and a few more are expected to follow suit.

The Board of Economic Inquiry is still in its infant stage, and the time has now come when it should extend its activities in different directions. I suggest that the Provincial Labour Departments, already suggested by me, should aim at the following objects:—

(1) They should collect information regarding the real social and economic condition of industrial workers;

(2) they should record the movements of food prices;

(3) they should encourage and promote goodwill between the employers and the employees;

(4) they should maintain a record of industrial disputes with special reference to wages; and

(5) they should play an important role in the settlement of industrial disputes.

As factories increase in number and size, Conciliation Boards will become a necessity. Before a strike actually breaks out, or even after it is in full swing, Conciliation Boards can render invaluable service.

Again, it has been shown above how wages vary from place to place and factory to factory. In some cases, they are much below the subsistence level. The Government here can establish Trade-Boards and help the poor and unorganised workmen who, for lack of combination, cannot advance their economic interests. The Trade-Boards can be called upon to fix standard rates of wages, wherever they find that the current rates in some industries are exceptionally low as compared with those in other employments.

There is one thing more to which I must now turn my attention. I have been emphasising all through that our factory-labourers suffer from three main difficulties—poverty, disease and ignorance. The first two things have already been fully discussed. The third requires further consideration.

I have observed that our workers are at present shrouded in a mass of ignorance. Their expenditure on education is exceedingly small. It is conspicuous by its absence in the lowest classes, and it increases as the family income increases. It is not necessary to mention the great loss which lack of education brings in its train. Education is an asset without which no community can make any headway. " The elements of educational problems can be simply stated. They are to secure for the children of to-day, who will be the men and women of to-morrow, such training, physical, intellectual and religious as may fit them to make the best of their own lives and, in doing so, to serve the nation to the best advantage. . . . . Initiative, self-reliance, judgment, character—these are among the chief

ends of education and one of the principal tests, by which the State's success in the educational field must always be examined, is the extent to which it has resulted in fostering these qualities." *

Thus, education † is essential for factory-labourers. As Dr. Marshall says,‡ "A good education confers great indirect benefits even on the ordinary workman. It stimulates his mental activity; it fosters in him a habit of wise inquisitiveness; it makes him more intelligent, more ready, more trustworthy in his ordinary work; it raises the tone of his life in working hours; it is thus an important means towards the production of material wealth."

Our educational system is defective, and requires much overhauling. As far as possible, elementary education must become preparatory education.§ It should initiate the student in the three R's and create a practical industrial bias in him.

Compulsory education has received great encouragement from the popular legislatures, and the latest figures show that compulsion has been introduced in 114 municipalities and 1,527 rural areas. The figures ‖ are interesting and are given below:—

* Sir George Lloyd and Hon'ble Wood: The Great Opportunity, pages 89-91 (London, John Murray, 1918).

† Minutes of evidence to the Indian Industrial Commission Report, 1916-18, Vol. I, page 10. Witness No. 3, R. B. Sultan Singh: "The late Mr. Gokhale, quoting an eminent German professor, well pointed out that no real economic or social development of a people is possible without the education of the masses. Such education is the foundation and necessary antecedent of increased economic activity in all branches of national production in agriculture, small industries, manufactures and commerce; it leads to a more equal distribution of the proceeds of labour; and it ensures a higher level of intelligence and a larger capacity for achieving social advance among the people. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of this question in the present state of India."

‡ Marshall: Principles of Economics, Book IV, Chapter VI, page 211. 8th edition; (London, 1922).

§ Report of the Industrial Commission (1916-18) Calcutta, 1918, page 96:— "A factor which has tended in the past to delay the progress of Indian industrial development has been the ignorance and conservatism of the uneducated workman. The evidence tendered by employers was almost universally in favour of labour, both skilled and unskilled, that had at least received a primary education. This is given in countries with which India will have to compete, and is a *sine qua non* in this country also."

‖ India in 1927-28: J. Coatman (Calcutta, 1928), page 364.

PROVINCE.		MUNICIPALITIES.	RURAL AREAS.
Madras	...	21	3
Bombay	...	7	...
Bengal	...	...	...
United Provinces	...	25	...
Punjab	...	57	1,499
Burma	...	...	...
Bihar and Orissa	...	1	4
Central Provinces	...	3	21
Assam	...	...	...
Grand Total	...	114	1,527

Of all the provinces, the Punjab shows signs of great awakening. One noteworthy feature of the progress of literacy in the last decade is the particular attention that is being paid to the education of depressed classes.* These have a claim on the assistance of Government that cannot be denied, and several institutions directed mainly towards their uplift have come into existence. Leaving aside Burma and Assam, the total number of depressed class pupils reading in 1927-28 came to an approximate figure of 667,000, giving a percentage of 2.3 to the total population of depressed classes.

Seven Primary Education Acts have so far come into force. Of these, the Bombay, the Central Provinces and the Madras Acts were alone applicable to girls at the close of the financial year 1926. The time has indeed come when an earnest attempt from the Local Governments in the direction of compulsory education for girls should be made. Domestic environments are still far from satisfactory and, unless the surroundings of childhood and youth are improved, no permanent good can be attained. It is the influence of the mother that is all-pervading in the early days of one's life. The condition of future generations can therefore be immensely improved by women's education, which would necessarily include training in hygiene and sanitation.

* Caste prejudices are slowly vanishing away though, in some places, they still exist in their old rigidity. In a Bombay mill in 1927, the Author saw a wrestling ground for labourers divided into two parts by means of an iron bar. One part was utilised by the untouchables, while the other was set apart for Hindus.

It is sometimes said that the factory-owners should provide for education for their employees. This is an impossible task, the more so as we find that no civilized Government has ever attempted it. A number of factories have no doubt schools attached to them. Some of these merely keep children, till they are old enough to work. A few are maintained with a view to keep uncertified children, when an inspector pays his surprise visit.

But there are notable exceptions. The Buckingham and Carnatic Mills in Madras, the Currimbhoy Ebrahim Mills and the Tata Mills in Bombay are prominent in their encouragement of elementary education. The Tata Iron and Steel Works, Jamshedpur * spend a large amount of money on the education

* At Jamshedpur, the following provisions for instruction are made :—

(*a*) *For children employed.*—under 12 years are employed as Office boys. There is a Night school. Courses: Hindi, English, Mathematics. No fees—prizes after examinations.

(*b*) *For Children of employees* :—

(i) *Schools managed by Company.*

	No. of Students.
Mrs. Perin Memorial Boys' High School up to Matriculation and S.S.L.C	380
Girls' Middle English	111
English Primary School	12
Primary Boys' Schools	773
Primary Girls' Schools	45

(ii) *Schools Aided by Company*:

	No. of Students.	Monthly Grant.
Vivekananda Society School	96	25
Gujarati School ...	35	15
Gurumukhi School ...	65	25
Mahulbera Primary School	48	25
Utkal Samiti Primary School	32	15
Anjuman-i-Islam School	26	15

(iii) *Independent Schools* :

Tamil Evening Class.

Andhra Society Evening Class.

(*c*) *For Adults employed*:

1. *Commercial School*—Courses: Typewriting and Shorthand—22 students.

2. *Technical School*—Evening classes for employees giving a general technical education. Senior classes prepare students for Engineering—Numbers attending: 190.

3. *Jamshedpur Technical Institute*—Residential institution for the theoretical and practical metallurgical training of Indians for Steel Works. 24 students are admitted every year for a

of their employees, and other enlightened employers are also prepared to contribute their humble quota.*

Literacy is an asset for a progressive community and the habit of reading should not be allowed to rust.† It is essential that public bodies should seriously consider the question of establishing small reading-rooms and libraries in the different parts of towns. An attempt of a similar nature undertaken by the employers in the interest of employees would prove fruitful. The wage-earners will be justified in looking for active help from factory-owners, who make huge profits from the output of cheap labour in normal times.

An attempt at educating the adults should not be ignored. For workers who spend ten hours and even more in a factory, night-schools may not be a success. But some factories already work for eight hours; the working hours in others are sure to

three years' course. Minimum educational qualifications—Intermediate Science.

(*d*) The following provisions are made for Reading-rooms, Writing-rooms, etc.—

1. Two reading rooms with libraries at the main Institute and at Branch No. 1 where usual newspapers, journals and periodicals are available for reading.
2. Free reading-room of Vivekananda Society, where about 20 English and Vernacular newspapers and periodicals are available for the public.
3. Reading Room at the Indian Association.
4. English and Miscellaneous Library in the Mrs. Perin Memorial Boys' High School.

* Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, (1916-18), Calcutta, 1918, pages 96 and 97:—"But we are not prepared to declare that the education of their labour is a duty of employers as such, and while we strongly endorse the views of employers of labour regarding the fundamental necessity for providing some form of primary education for the artisan and labouring population, we are opposed to any scheme that would compel individual employers to provide such education. This is a duty which, we think, rightly devolves on local authorities or on Government . . . . . and we need only support the proposal that, when private employers undertake this task, they should be assisted in every possible way, including the allocation of grants-in-aid by the Local Governments."

† Education—The Socialist Policy: R. H. Tawney (London, 1924), page 13:—

"If we are to avoid strangling the next generation in the red tape of the last, we must at every point ask ourselves how far the organisation which we have inherited corresponds to the realities of human development, which it is the business of education to assist."

come down either spontaneously or through legislation. Thus, night schools, if run by sympathetic hands, are likely to be a success.

Side by side with night schools, an effort should be made towards the establishment of Sunday schools. Almost every factory closes on Sunday, which is observed as a weekly day of rest. It would be in the fitness of things to try this experiment. I have had a talk with some educated labourers during my summer tour in India in 1927. They are very hopeful of the success of such a scheme and the earlier it materialises, the better for the community.

Regarding industrial education, I am of opinion that middle schools, in future, should have an industrial and technical side and include a course of carpentry (including drawing), design and the use of hand tools. Education is slowly tending towards this direction and this is sure to prove helpful to the people at large.

As our industries progress, there will be a greater and greater demand for skilled fitters, turners, moulders, etc. The Government should try to combine 'industrial school' and apprenticeship, thereby enabling the boys to spend half the time in workshops and the other half in schools acquiring ordinary academic education. The factory-owners, on their part, should seriously take up the training of promising labourers in higher work. There is usually no provision for apprenticeship in our factories *—an element which is necessary for success in our present industrial situation. Every avenue should be explored to improve not only the skill but also the prospects of the workmen.

In some Government Works, preferential treatment † is still accorded to Anglo-Indians and Europeans as regards remunera-

* Indian Industrial Commission Report (1916–18), Calcutta, 1918, page 103 :—

"Above the skilled workman is the maistry or foreman, and the provision for training such men is hopelessly insufficient. We were forcibly struck, when visiting the large railway and private workshops throughout India, with the almost complete absence of Indians from the ranks of foremen and chargemen—the non-commissioned officers of the great army of engineering artisans."

† Ibid., pages 104 and 105 :—

" Railway workshops are in many cases already receiving European and Anglo-Indian apprentices to whom some degree of technical training is given with the

tion and allowances. In some cases Indian apprentices are not often taken. This complaint comes mainly from workers employed in railway workshops. Let us hope that no such discrimination will be made in future. We are on our way towards responsible government, and such useless distinctions create ill-will for nothing.

Labour is growing in importance day after day and separate representation has already been accorded to it in the local Legislative Councils as also in the Central legislature.

To conclude. The factory-labourer is poor, very poor. His labour is often sweated and underpaid. He is badly fed, badly clothed and badly housed and is subject to occasional epidemics. He is also ignorant and unorganised. Let me point out that his low-paid labour casts a malignant influence on the Western world. "Bad conditions of labour in one country operate with fatal effect in depressing conditions of labour in another." *

Does the English workman like to bring down his standard of living owing to adverse conditions from the East? Surely, he does not. He has become accustomed to a particular standard of livelihood, and is not prepared to reduce it voluntarily. But he will have to succumb if he remains palpably indifferent to the affairs of other parts of the world. We want to achieve our purpose not by bringing down English labour, but by improving and elevating the degrading conditions in our country.

The English labourer has become half-conscious of this fact, of late. His knowledge of things is only hearsay, but he has begun to display some practical interest. The Workers' Welfare League of India in London has been founded with a view to

object of enabling them to obtain posts as foremen, or, in special cases, even higher appointments. There is, however, a noteworthy absence of provision for the middle-class Indian. We consider it of great importance that the conditions of training should be such as the educated Indian youth will consider consistent with his sense of self-respect; for, if this is not satisfied, we shall be depriving ourselves of a most promising field of recruitment. The arrangments made for Indian apprentices are at present inadequate and the stipends paid them during the period of training and the salaries offered on its completion are very much lower than the corresponding amounts in the case of Europeans and Anglo-Indians, a fact which is largely responsible for the failure of the better educated Indians to take advantage of these courses."

* Lord Robert Cecil in *Daily Chronicle*, February 15th, 1919, page 1, column 4.

protect the interests of Indian workers and to keep the British in touch with their condition. Its aims are :—

(*a*) Independently of all political aims or movements to advocate the institution in India of provision for the welfare of the working population, equivalent to, if not identical with, that granted to the work-people of Great Britain.

(*b*) to propagate among the democratic bodies of Great Britain the general principle that Orientals have the same claim to human rights as Occidentals, including the right to organise and form trade-unions.

In 1925, the jute workers of Dundee sent a deputation to India to investigate and inquire into the condition of Indian jute workers. This was followed by another deputation of two members sent out by the Workers' Welfare League in 1927 to make a first-hand study of the condition of Indian labour. These deputations have been followed by others, and have been productive of good results. A study of Indian labour will create a solidarity in the interests of labouring classes in India as well as England. Since 1919, the year of the Washington Conference, India has been permanently linked up with the external world and has gained greatly therefrom.

But the advantage from an equalisation of labour conditions is not one-sided. It is mutual. A rise in the standard of living of the Indian labourer will increase his purchasing power and thereby react on English industries and English labourers.

A movement towards World Unionism is already on foot. Let us hope that it will soon materialise and attain a force commensurate with the magnitude of its work. There are two questions before our labourers to-day—how to live and how to live well. The English labourers will, I believe, lend necessary support towards their speedy solution.

APPENDIX "A"

Statement of wages in some Punjab factories as collected by the Author in his tour.

Factory A

		Rs.	A.	
Engineer (1st class)...	... Rs. 275, 125,	110	0	per month
Engineer (2nd class)	... ...	145	0	,,
Engine Drivers ...	... Rs. 65 and	55	0	,,
Fitters,	ranging between ,, 52 and	110	0	,,
Firemen,	ranging between Re. 1-1 and	1	10	per day
Oilmen ...	... ...	1	0	,,
Carpenters	... ...	1	14	,,
Blacksmiths	... ... Re. 1-8 and	2	9	,,

Factory B

Ordinary unskilled labour	... Rs. 18 to	22	0	per month
Skilled labour	... ... ,, 25 to	30	0	,,
Worker on Shaving Machine ...	... ...	38	0	,,
Worker on Splitting Machine ...	... ...	75	0	,,

Factory C

Oilmen ...	... ...	20	0	per month
Ironsmiths	... ...	50	0	,,
Engineer (2nd class)	... ...	135	0	,,
Firemen ...	... ...	32	0	,,
Khanchiman (centrifugal)	... Rs. 22 to	27	0	,,
Fitters ...	... ...	22	0	,,
Sievemen ...	... ...	18	0	,,
Ordinary unskilled labourers ...	... ...	0	12	daily

Factory D

Engineer (2nd class)	... ...	115	0	per month
Engine Driver	... ...	45	0	,,
Fitter ...	... ...	64	0	,,
Fireman ...	... ...	40	0	,,
Oilmen ...	... ...	22	0	,,
Carpenter ...	... ...	37	0	,,
Mochi ...	... ...	35	0	,,
Chowkidar	... ...	18	0	,,
Opener or Press Coolies	... ...	1	4	per day
Coolie (woman on gins)	... ...	0	7	,,

Factory E

	Rs.	A.	
Engineer (2nd class)	150	0	per month
Engine Driver	50	0	,,
Fitter	90	0	,,
Fireman	40	0	,,
Oilman	30	0	,,
Carpenter	50	0	,,
Blacksmith	40	0	,,
Mochi	50	0	,,
Chowkidar	20	0	,,
Opener or Press Coolie	1	0	per day
Coolie (woman on gins)	0	6	,,

Factory F

Engineer (1st class)	195	0	per month
Engineer (2nd class)	50	0	,,
Engine Driver ... ... Rs. 35 to	60	0	,,
Fitters ... ... ,, 30 to	60	0	,,
Firemen ... ... ,, 24 to	35	0	,,
Oilmen ... ... ,, 20 to	35	0	,,
Carpenters ... ... ,, 25 to	40	0	,,
Blacksmiths ... ... ,, 35 to	55	0	,,
Mochi ... ... ,, 25 to	35	0	,,
Weaver ... ... ,, 35 to	60	0	,,
Spinner ... ... ,, 20 to	28	0	,,
Dyer ... ... ,, 19 to	24	0	,,
Chowkidar ... ... ,, 15 to	23	0	,,
Opener or Press Coolies ... As. 10-6 to	As. 13	6	per day

Factory G

Engine Driver ... ... Rs. 70 and	45	0	per month
Fitter	50	0	,,
Fireman	38	0	,,
Oilman	20	0	,,
Carpenter	40	0	,,
Blacksmith	60	0	,,
Mochi	53	0	,,
Press Distributor	40	0	,,
Press Compositor ... ... Rs. 30 to	47	0	,,
Chowkidar	19	0	,,
Opener or Press Coolie ... Rs. 15 to	18	0	,,

Factory H

	Rs.	A.	
Engineer (2nd class)	90	0	per month
Engine Driver	35	0	"
Fitter	50	0	"
Fireman	35	0	"
Oilman	18	0	"
Mochi	35	0	"
Chowkidar	20	0	"

Factory I

Engineer (2nd class)	150	0	per month
Engine Driver	110	0	"
Fitter	35	0	"
Fireman	30	0	"
Oilman	60	0	"
Carpenter	45	0	"
Chowkidar	16	0	"

Factory J

Miller	550	0
Engineer	150	0
Head Fitter	107	0
Fitters	51	0
Spoutman	20	8
Mistri	120	0
Whirl Scourer	19	0
Rulemen	27	0
Purifier Room	18	0
Cleaner	19	0
Carpenter	88	0

Factory K

Engineer (2nd class)	150	0
Engine Driver	40	0
Fitter	25	0
Fireman	33	0
Carpenter	60	0
Blacksmith	50	0
Chowkidar	16	0

Factory L

	Minimum per day. Rs. A.	Maximum per day. Rs. A.
Leading Fitters (Mistris) ...	3 0	5 8
Fitters	1 4	2 8
Apprentice Fitters { Europeans	0 14	1 8
Apprentice Fitters { Indians.	0 8	1 2
Turners	0 15	2 8
Drillers	0 12	1 12
Slotters, Planers	1 6	2 8
Shapers	1 4	2 4
Masons	2 0	2 8
Trimmers and Belters ...	1 14	2 0
Oilmen	0 14	1 12
Drivers	1 8	2 0
Firemen	1 8	1 8
Mill Wrightman	1 8	2 8
Blacksmiths	1 4	2 8
Hammermen	0 14	1 2
Carpenters	1 4	2 8
Painters	0 14	2 8
Batterymen	2 0	2 0
Coolies	0 10	0 12
Coolie Jamadars	1 1	2 8
Moulders	1 0	2 8
Core-makers	0 7	2 8
Fettlers	0 8	2 0
Tuyer Cleaners	1 6	1 7
Chowkidars	...	Rs. 15 to 20 per month
Chowkidar Jamadars ...	...	„ 22 to 25 „

Factory M

		Rs. A.
Engineer (2nd class) ...	Rs. 500 0 to	650 0 per month
Shift Chargeman	„ 185 0 to	350 0 „
Boiler House Chargeman ...	„ 185 0 to	350 0 „
Engine Driver	„ 65 0 to	105 0 „
Fitter	„ 1 4 to	2 8 per day
Fireman	„ 30 0 to	50 0 per month
do.	„ 1 4 to	3 0 per day
Greasers	„ 20 0 to	30 0 per month

Factory M—(Continued)

		Rs. A.	
Greasers	Rs. 0 14 to	1 2	per day
Blacksmiths	" 1 4 to	2 8	"
Coolies	" 0 10 to	1 2	"
Winders	" 1 4 to	2 8	"
Masons	" 1 4 to	2 8	"
Wiremen	" 1 4 to	2 8	"
Painters	" 1 4 to	2 8	"
Turners	" 1 4 to	2 8	"
Pump-Drivers	" 30 0 to	50 0	per month
Chowkidars	" 15 0 to	20 0	"
Jamadar	" 21 0 to	28 0	"
Apprentices (Literate) ...	" 50 0 to	90 0	"
and	" 50 0 to	120 0	"
Linemen	" 1 4 to	2 8	per day
Mistris	" 2 10 to	4 2	"
Jamadar Coolies	" 1 4 to	2 8	"
Switch Board Attendants ...	" 1 4 to	2 8	"

Factory N

Mistri	30 0	per month
Coolies	0 6	per day
Turners	40 0	per month
Fitters, Carpenters and Ironsmiths	30 0	"
Factory-Manager	200 0	"

Factory O

Head Chowkidar	28 0	per month
Chowkidar	20 0	"
Mason	1 12	per day
Dyer	110 0	per month
Another Dyer	52 0	"
Coolies	As. 8 to 0 14	per day
Firemen	Re. 1 8½	"
Fitters	Re. 1 to 1 12	"
Blacksmith	1 8	"
Turner	1 12	"
Carpenter	1 12	"
Carding Jamadar	1 10	"
Carder	As. 13 to 1 0	"

Factory O—(Continued)

		Rs.	A.	
Mochi	...	1	3	per day
Spinning Jamadar	...	1	8	,,
Spinners	As. 8 to	1	0	,,
Reelers	,, 6 to	0	7	,,
Teasers	,, 12 to	0	15	,,
Teasing Jamadars	...	1	15	,,
Mender	...	1	4	,,
Packer	...	1	0	,,
Winders	...	0	7	,,

Factory P

Engine Driver ...	40	0	per month
Ropeman ...	33	0	,,
Oilman ...	21	0	,,
Fireman ...	30	0	,,
Mechanics ...	40	0	,,
Blow-Room ...	18	0	,,
Carding Tenders and Lap Carriers ...	18	0	,,
Drawing Frame ...	22	0	,,
Slubbing Frame ...	23	0	,,
Intermediate Frame ...	20	0	,,
Rowing Frame ...	18	0	,,
Substitutes ...	20	0	,,
Sweepers ...	16	0	,,
Whole-time Doffers ...	11	4	,,
Half-time Doffers ...	6	4	,,
Mistris (Carding and Spinning) ...	70	0	,,
Mule Minders ...	28	0	,,
Mule Piecers ...	23	0	,,
Bobbin Boys ...	16	4	,,
Reelers ...	35	0	,,
Bundling ...	25	0	,,
Bailing ...	17	8	,,
General Departments ...	17	8	,,
Ginning ...	As. 7 per day for women. As. 12 per day for men		
Winders ...	35	0	per month
Warpers ...	28	0	,,
Sizers ...	45	0	,,
Drawers ...	28	0	,,

Factory P—(Continued)

	Rs.	A.	
Weaving Jobbers	85	0	per month
Finishers	18	0	"
Weavers	50	0	"
Calenders	20	0	"
Bleachers and Dyers	17	8	"
One Manager and Engineer	500	0	"

Factory Q

	Rs.	A.	
Engineer (1st class)	275	0	per month
Engineer (2nd class)	175	0	"
Drivers	Rs. 44 and 38	0	"
Oilman	23	0	"
Blacksmith	Rs. 51, 45 and 38	0	"
Fitter Coolie	23	0	"
Fireman	36	0	"
Coalman	23	0	"
Ordinary Labourer	0	12	per day
Fittermen	24	0	per month
Pressmen	23	0	"
Bag-wash	23	0	"
Supervisor	48	0	"
Head Pan-man	215	0	"
Pan-man	Rs. 85 0 and 70	0	"
Pan-Coolies	" 22 8 and 32	0	"
Centrifugal Supervisor	" 25 0 to 42	0	"
Centrifugal Workers	23	8	"
Mill Manager	175	0	"
Assistant Mill Manager	100	0	"

Factory R

	Rs.	A.	
Master-Weavers	Rs. 40 per month on an average		
Adult Males	20	0	per month
Children under 12	Re. 0 1½ to 0	4	per day
Children between 12 and 15	About 12	0	per month
Head Dyer	88	0	"
Other Dyers	Rs. 20 to 25	0	"
One Driver and Engineer	60	0	"
Fireman	35	0	"

Factory S

	Rs.	A.	
One Engineer	900	0	per month
One Superintendent	400	0	,,
One Assistant Superintendent	125	0	,,
One Head Fitter	105	0	,,
Overtime allowance ...	15	0	,,
Drivers ... ... Rs. 40 to	60	0	,,
Firemen	30	0	,,
Boiler cleaners	20	0	,,
Oilmen	17	0	,,
Coalmen	17	0	,,
Engine-Cleaners	18	0	,,
Sweeper	12	0	,,
Gate-keeper	20	0	,,
Well-Chowkidar	20	0	,,
Sub-station Fitter	130	0	,,
Coolie	18	0	,,
Electrician	70	0	,,
Electrician Coolie	20	0	,,
Chowkidar	19	0	,,

Factory T

Foreman	110	0	per month
Chowkidar	20	0	,,
Fitter ... ... Rs. 66 and	52	0	,,
Fitter Tinsmith	50	0	,,
Turner	67	0	,,
Junior Turner	35	0	,,
Carpenter	60	0	,,
Moulder	67	0	,,
Coolies	20	0	,,
One Boy Coolie	10	0	,,

Factory U

Factory Superintendent	168	0	per month
Transport Clerk	80	0	,,
Factory Foreman	100	0	,,
Storekeeper	60	0	,,
Laboratory Assistant	42	0	,,
do. Attendants	22	0	,,
do. Cleaners	20	0	,,
Resin Foreman	41	0	,,

Factory U—(Continued)

		Rs.	A.	
Turpentine Foreman		30	0	per month
Turpentine Coolie	As. 11 to	0	12	per day
Rosin Foreman		33	0	per month
Rosin Assistant		25	0	,,
Rosin Stocking Coolie		0	12	per day
Head Distiller		99	0	per month
Fitter		45	0	,,
Fitter Coolie		0	14	per day
Maintenance Carpenter		60	0	per month
do. Blacksmith		55	0	,,
do. Coolie		0	14	per day
do. Water-carrier		0	12	,,
Sweeper		0	8	,,
Boiler-in-charge		80	0	per month
,, Fireman		26	0	,,
Boiler Apprentice		0	14	per day
Resin Collection Coolie		0	12	,,
Vacuum Plant Coolie		0	12	,,
Firewood Coolie		0	12	,,
Ash Removal		0	12	,,
Gas Engine		0	12	,,
Cinder Collection		0	12	,,
Mason		2	4	,,
Saw-Machine Mistri		40	0	per month
do. Coolie		0	12	,,
Distillers	Rs. 82, 45,	35	0	,,
Assistant Distillers	,, 40, 35,	35	0	,,
Lagging		33	0	,,
Rosin Shed Foremen		30	0	,,
Dipping Coolies		0	12	per day
Vacuum Plant		0	12	,,
Chowkidar		18	0	per month

Factory V

I. Power Generating Department :—

Drivers	Rs. 2–6 to	3	0	per day
Assistant Firemen		1	8	,,
Oiler, Power House		1	2	,,
B. H. Aspitman		1	0	,,
Coolies		0	10	,,

Factory V—(Continued)

		Rs.	A.	
II. Slurry Production Department :—				
Fitters ...	... ...	2	7	per day
Motor man	between Re. 1-2 and	2	8	,,
III. Clinker Production Department :—				
Fitters ...	... Rs. 2-4 to	3	0	per day
Motor man	... As. 10 to	2	8	,,
IV. Cement Production Department :—				
Miller ...	... ...	1	10	per day
Oiler ...	... ...	1	2	,,
Cleaner ...	... ...	0	8	,,
Motor man	... ...	2	2	,,
V. Cement Packing Department :—				
Mate Coolies	... ...	1	0	per day
Coolies ...	... ...	0	10	,,
VI. Laboratory Department :—				
Calcimetres	... ...	1	0	per day
Testers ...	... ...	0	8	,,
VII. Raw Mill Department :—				
Cleaners	... ...	0	10	per day
Khalasis	... ...	1	8	,,
VIII. Stores :—				
Cobbler	... ...	1	2	per day
Chowkidar	... ...	0	9	,,
IX. Workshop :—				
Fitters ...	... ...	2	4	per day
Moulders	... Re. 1 to	3	0	,,
Turners ...	... ...	2	8	,,
Blacksmith	... ... As. 10 to	2	8	,,
Blacksmith Coolies	... ,, 8 to	0	10	,,
Carpenters	... ... Re. 1-8 to	3	0	,,
Coolies ...	... ... As. 8 to	0	10	,,
X. Masons ...	... ... Re. 1-8 to	2	8	,,
XI. Khalasis ...	... ... As. 12 to	1	4	,,

Factory V—(Continued)

XII. Superior Staff (Permanent) :—

		Rs.	A.	
Manager ...	... ...	1,050	0	per month
Engineer	... ...	928	0	"
Works Foreman	... ...	700	0	"
Chemist	... ...	425	0	"
Accountant	... ...	400	0	"
Assistant Engineer	...	262	0	"
Assistant Foreman	...	125	0	"
Laboratory Assistant	Rs. 40 to	112	0	"
Chief Time-Keeper	...	92	0	"
Assistant Time-Keeper	Rs. 35 to	72	0	"
Store-Keeper	... ...	77	0	"

APPENDIX "B"

The following questionnaire was used by the Author for the collection of family budgets of factory-labourers in 1920 and 1921. The results obtained therefrom appear in Chapter V.

Questionnaire No. 1

For Family Budgets

I. *Family :—*

(*a*) What religion?

(*b*) How many persons in household?
(State sex, age, and relationship with the labourer).

(*c*) How many children have died and from what cause?

(*d*) What is the state of health of each member?

(*e*) What other dependants (*a*) living with family, (*b*) living elsewhere.

(*f*) District of origin of the labourer.

II. *Family Income :*—(Average monthly income for the preceding year).

(*a*) What was labourer's monthly wage? How much commission?

(*b*) What other wage-earners were there in the household? What relations were they to the labourer? And what were their occupations?

(*c*) What was the average monthly wages of each wage-earner?

(*d*) What additional monthly income (e.g. from property) was obtained and from what source?

(*e*) What were the receipts in kind during the preceding year and what was their approximate value?

(*f*) How many hours' work a day?

(*g*) Is work regular or intermittent?

(*h*) State days of unemployment during the last year.

III. *Housing :—*

(*a*) Is house separate or a tenement?

(*b*) Is it owned or rented?

III. Housing :—(Continued)

(*c*) What is the rent?

(*d*) Does the labourer pay for repairs? If so, how much does he pay?

(*e*) Is there any sub-tenant? If so, how much does he pay?

(*f*) How many rooms? And what are the dimensions of each?

(*g*) State use of each room.

(*h*) Is house made of brick or mud?

(*i*) How are rooms (i) ventilated, (ii) roofed, and (iii) lighted?

(*j*) Describe furniture of each room. Describe flooring.

(*k*) What bathing arrangements are there?
Describe conditions of surroundings.

(*l*) What sanitary arrangements are there?

(*m*) Where is drinking water obtained from?

(*n*) Is there any accommodation for livestock?

(*o*) What livestock is there?

(*p*) Is there any yard? If so, is it private or common to several houses?

IV. Food :—(Average monthly last year)

(*a*) State number of meals taken by family per day.

(*b*) State kind of food consumed (e.g. fish meat, wheat, ghee, rice, sugar, vegetable, milk, oil, etc.

(*c*) State quantities of each ordinarily consumed per month by the family.

(*d*) State expenditure on each article of food per month, including salt and spices.

(*e*) When are bills for various articles of food paid?

(*f*) Mention whether bought, cooked or not.

(*g*) At what intervals are various kinds of goods bought?

(*h*) State kind and monthly cost of fuel for cooking.

(*i*) What was the expenditure on cooking utensils or pottery last year?

(*j*) What arrangements are there for storing food: (*a*) raw materials, (b) cooked food?

(*k*) What arrangements are there for washing cooking utensils?

V. Lighting arrangements :—

What is the nature and cost of artificial lighting?

If lamps are used, state kind of oil used.

VI. Services :—

(*a*) What is the monthly cost of barbering for the family?

(*b*) What is the monthly *dhobi* (laundry) bill?

VII. Clothing :—

(*a*) Give details of clothing bought for family last year.

(*b*) Give details of shoes bought last year.

(*c*) State cost of each article (if home-made, give cost of material and making-up).

(*d*) Were any clothes handed down by dowry to the family?

(*e*) Were any gifts of clothing received during the year? If so, from where?

(*f*) Give details of any expenditure on clothes-mending and shoe-repairs.

VIII. Education :—

(*a*) Has the labourer read any language? If so, which?

(*b*) Can he write any language?

(*c*) Can any of the family read or write?

(*d*) What is the expenditure on education of children? And where are they educated?

IX. Medical Attendance :—

(*a*) Give cost of any medical attendance to the family during the last year (including medicine).

(*b*) Mention disease or ailment for which medical attendance was obtained last year.

(*c*) What were the qualifications of the physician?

(*d*) Is the civil dispensary made use of? If not, why not?

X. Ceremonies :—

(*a*) Give list of ceremonies in the family during the last four years.

(*b*) What was the cost on each occasion?

(*c*) Mention any ceremonies which were attended outside family circle and any expenditure incurred thereon.

(*d*) Has any member of the family been to a place of pilgrimage? State the cost.

XI. Amusements :—

Give details of expenditure during last year on fairs, tobacco drinks, betelnut, etc.

XII. Entertainment of Guests :—

Give details and cost of entertaining guests or other hospitality (not already included under other heads).

XIII. Charities or Presents :—

Mention expenses, if any.

XIV. Savings :—

What was the amount actually saved last year? How is it utilised.

XV. Mention any expenditure on sundries not included in above heads, e.g., stationery, stamps, soap, etc.

XVI. Indebtedness :—

(*a*) Give total amount of any debts.

(*b*) How were they incurred?

(*c*) What is the amount of debts repaid last year?

(*d*) What is the amount of monthly interest due?

(*e*) What is the amount of interest actually paid last year?

(*f*) What is the security offered to the *Bania* by the labourer?

APPENDIX "C"

The following questionnaire was framed by the Author in April, 1927, and copies of it were circulated amongst the factory-owners. The scheme was later on dropped and the Author himself collected a mass of material, in the light of this questionnaire, in his tour in 1927. The results of the enquiries thus made appear in the foregoing pages.

Questionnaire No. 2

For Factory-owners only

I. *Business* :—

(*a*) State your business. When was it started?

(*b*) Give the total number of your employees classified as under :—

(*i*) Adults (male)

(*ii*) Adults (female)

(*iii*) Children (male)

(*iv*) Children (female)

(*v*) Total.

(*c*) Give the number of skilled as well as unskilled labourers under you.

(*d*) Have you got any apprentices? If so, state the duration and the kind of training given.

II. *Contract of Work* :—

(*a*) How are labourers employed? Direct or through contractors?

(*b*) If through contractor, state the commission paid.

(*c*) Is contractor an independent man or in your employ?

(*d*) What is the length of notice for bringing the contract to an end on both sides.

(*e*) State the average period of service of labourers under different categories.

III. *Working Hours* :—

(*a*) State the number of working hours in your firm per week, and per day.

III. Working Hours :—(Continued)

(*b*) Are the workers engaged overtime? If so, how long and at what periods? How is overtime wage reckoned?

(*c*) Does any labourer work on Sundays or other holidays?

(*d*) State the number of holidays including the weekly day of rest which the workers receive every year.

IV. Wages :—

(*a*) How are they calculated? By piecework or day-work, or any other way.

(*b*) Are wages paid weekly, fortnightly, or monthly?

(*c*) Are the employers paid any bonus in addition to wages? Are their wages cut down in any way?

(*d*) Are wages paid in money? State the amount and value of payment made in kind. (e.g. house free of rent, free oil, fuel, etc.)

(*e*) State your rules in regard to fines on workmen.

(*f*) If the worker leaves without notice, are his wages forfeited wholly or partially? If so, where do they go? state the amount of unclaimed or forfeited wages during the last two years.

(*g*) Give the rates of wages in different categories in as much detail as possible.

V. Strikes and Lock-outs :—

(*a*) State the number of strikes and lock-outs in your factory ever since its establishment.

(*b*) State causes of the same.

(*c*) Give dates of commencement and termination.

(*d*) State the number of employees directly engaged in the disputes as compared with the total number at the time in your factory.

(*e*) Describe the number of workers who were thrown out of employment but who were not directly engaged in the dispute.

(*f*) Give the amount of loss to the employees in each strike.

(*g*) Give the total amount of loss in wages which the workers (strikers and non-strikers) suffered during the period of strike.

V. Strikes and Lock-outs :—(Continued)

(*h*) What was the result of the strike ?

(*i*) What was the attitude of other employers towards the dispute ?

(For Chambers of Industries only)

(*j*) Give the total amount of money spent by your association on different strikes.

(*k*) How was it spent ? With what end in view ?

(*l*) State the number of establishments connected with your association.

VI. Medical :—

(*a*) What arrangements exist in the factory as regards medical relief ? Is there any physician attached to the factory ? If so, state his qualifications, and the number of hours put in by him for his patients.

(*b*) State the number of patients treated by him every day on an average. What is the most prevalent disease or diseases ? State causes, if possible.

(*c*) Is there any indoor ward for the patients ? If so, state the number of patients in it on an average every day.

(*d*) State the amount of money spent by the factory for the workmen ?

VII. Water :—

(*a*) Is there any supply of cool water in the factory for the workmen ?

(*b*) Where is the water obtained from ? Is it filtered or not ?

VIII. Education :—

(*a*) What is the total number of literate labourers ?
Describe under the following heads :—

(*i*) Male

(*ii*) Female.

Note :—The term literate refers to a person who can both read and write any language.

(*b*) Is any school maintained by the Factory ? If so, state the total number of students. State as well the courses of instruction and the kind of training imparted to students.

(*c*) How many teachers are there in the school ?
What is the qualification of each ?

IX. *Housing* :—

(*a*) Are quarters supplied to workmen?

(*b*) State total accommodation.

(*c*) Give dimensions of a typical room. Is it whitewashed or not?

Is floor cemented or not? Is it ventilated? If so, how? Give full details bearing on this question.

X. *Miscellaneous* :—

(*a*) Is any cinema-show maintained by the employers for their workmen?

(*b*) Where do the mill-hands stay in the mid-day interval? Is any park or shed provided for this purpose? When and where do the workers dine at the time of rest, i.e., mid-day interval?

(*c*) Are first-aid appliances maintained by the factory proprietor?

(*d*) Has the mill proprietor been ever punished (fined or warned) for a breach of law? If so, state the exact fault.

Note :—The answer should relate to the last five years, i.e., 1922–26.

(*e*) Are the workers given to loitering in the working hours of the mill? If so, state the amount of time wasted in this way daily by each wage-earner.

(*f*) State the number of latrines in the premises of the factory.

Also give the number of urinals.

(*g*) State the number of sweepers especially set apart for keeping the latrines and urinals clean. What are their working hours?

(*h*) Discuss the effect of factory conditions on the health and efficiency of workers.

(*i*) What is the general temperature of your mill during the working hours? Is it heated during winter? Are there any cooling arrangements in the summer season? If so, describe their nature.

(*j*) Are you in favour of a working day of nine hours? Give reasons for your answer.

X. Miscellaneous :—(Continued)

(*k*) Was the employer ever dragged into court by the worker? If so, on what grounds, and with what results?

(*l*) State your grievances, if any, against the workers.

(*m*) Give details, if any, of insurance of labour on your part against risks under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

APPENDIX "D"

Periods of Wage-Payment *

PROVINCE	PERIOD OF PAYMENT	WAITING PERIOD
	Cement Works	
Bengal	Weekly	$4\frac{1}{2}$ days
Bihar and Orissa ...	Weekly	3 days
	Monthly	None
Central Provinces ...	Fortnightly	4–5 days
	Monthly	4–6 days
	Weekly	15 days
Madras	Monthly	8–15 days
Punjab	Monthly	7 days
	Brick Works	
Assam	Fortnightly	3 days
Baluchistan ...	Monthly	7 days
Bengal	About one month generally	15 days
Bihar and Orissa ...	Weekly	1 day
	Daily	None
Bombay	Monthly	None
	Fortnightly	10 days
	Weekly	1–6 days
	Daily	None
	Special	Work done on contract
Burma	Monthly	4 days
Central Provinces ...	Weekly	1 day
	Monthly	...
Delhi	Contract system ...	Advance given every fortnight. Final settlement of wages made after every 2 or 3 months.
Madras	Fortnightly	5 days
	Weekly	Wages paid on market day
North-West Frontier Province ...	Weekly	1 day
United Provinces ...	Fortnightly	1 day

* Bulletins of Indian Industries and Labour—No. 34—(Calcutta, 1925).

Province	Period of Payment	Waiting Period
Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories		
Ajmere-Marwara—		
Permanent Labour ..	Monthly	7–10 days
Casual Labour ...	Weekly	...
Bengal—		
Permanent Labour...	Monthly	15 days
Casual Labour ...	Weekly	None
Bombay	Monthly	1–14 days
	Fortnightly	3–4 days and, in one case, 20 days
	Weekly	1–2 days
	Daily	None
Burma	Daily	1 day
	Monthly	15 days
	Weekly	1 day
Central Provinces—		
Skilled Labour ...	Monthly	7–10 days
Unskilled Labour ...	Weekly	1 day
Delhi	Monthly	15 days
Madras	Monthly	10 days
	Weekly	...
	After every 10 days ...	...
Punjab	Monthly	7–10 days
United Provinces—		
Gin Workers ...	Daily	...
Others	Monthly	15 days
Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills		
Ajmere-Marwara ...	Monthly	15 days
Bengal—		
Permanent Labour...	Monthly	15–25 days
Casual Labour ...	Weekly	7 days
Bombay	Monthly	12–15 days
Burma—		
Employees ...	Monthly	15 days
Labourers ...	Daily	None
Piece-workers ...	Piece-workers are paid on completion of their jobs	...
Central Provinces ...	Monthly	15–20 days
Delhi	Monthly	15 days
Madras ...	Monthly	10–25 days
	Weekly	...

Province	Period of Payment	Waiting Period
Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills—(Continued)		
Punjab	Monthly	15 days
United Provinces ...	Monthly	10 days
	Fortnightly	10 days
Engineering Works		
Assam	Fortnightly	3–6 days
	Monthly	5–15 days
Baluchistan ...	Monthly	10 days
Bengal—		
Firms' Employees ...	Monthly	15 days
Contractors' Employees.	The Contractor is paid monthly. He is given intermediate advances as required.	...
Bihar and Orissa ...	Monthly	14–15 days
	Weekly	...
Bombay	Monthly	14–30 days
	Fortnightly	7–14 days
Burma	Monthly	15 days
Central Provinces ...	Monthly	15-20 days
...	Weekly	...
Delhi	Monthly	10 days
...	Fortnightly	3–4 days
Madras	Monthly	10–20 days
	Fortnightly	6–12 days
Punjab	Monthly	15 days
United Provinces ...	Fortnightly	10 days
	Monthly	2–14 days
Flour Mills		
Baluchistan ...	Monthly	30 days
Bengal	Monthly	15 days
	Weekly	7 days
	Monthly	15 days
Bihar and Orissa ...	Fortnightly	3 days
	Monthly	1–5 days
Bombay	Monthly	1–30 days
	Weekly	0–10 days
	Daily	0–1 day
Burma	Monthly	1–7 days
Central Provinces ...	Weekly	None
Delhi	Monthly	15 days

Province	Period of Payment	Waiting Period
Flour Mills—(Continued)		
Madras	Monthly	10–12 days
	Weekly	...
Punjab	Monthly	10 days
United Provinces ...	Monthly	15 days
Printing Presses		
Ajmere-Marwara ...	Monthly	15 days
Assam	Monthly	7–30 days
	Weekly	7 days
Baluchistan... ...	Monthly	20 days
Bengal	Monthly	7–20 days
Bihar and Orissa ...	Monthly	1–7 days
Bombay	Monthly	1–60 days
	Fortnightly	5–25 days
	Weekly	10 days
Burma	Monthly	15 days
	Weekly	...
	Daily	7 days
Central Provinces ...	Monthly	5–20 days
Delhi	Monthly	1–17 days
Madras	Monthly	1–20 days
	Fortnightly	3–6 days
Punjab	Monthly	1–15 days
United Provinces ...	Monthly	15 days
Rice Mills		
Assam	Monthly	1–7 days
	Daily	...
Bengal	Monthly	10 days
	Fortnightly	7 days
	Weekly	2 days
	Daily	None
Bihar and Orissa ...	Weekly	1 day
	Monthly	5–14 days
Bombay	Monthly	1–15 days
	Weekly	2 days
	Daily	1–2 days
	Fortnightly	...
Burma	Monthly	15 days
	Weekly	15 days
	Daily	15 days

Province	Period of Payment	Waiting Period
Rice Mills—(Continued)		
Central Provinces ...	Monthly	5 days
	Weekly	2 days
Madras	Monthly	1–10 days
	Weekly	1–10 days
	Daily	1–10 days
Punjab	Monthly	10 days
	Weekly	10 days
	Daily	10 days
Iron and Steel Works		
Bengal	Monthly	10 days
	Fortnightly	7 days
	Weekly	2 days
	Daily	None
Bihar and Orissa ...	Monthly	4–17 days
	Weekly	1–4 days
Bombay	Monthly	1–15 days
	Fortnightly	10–28 days
	Daily	...
Delhi	Monthly	10 days
Madras	Monthly	10 days
	Fortnightly	10 days
	Weekly	...
Punjab	Monthly	7–10 days
Sugar Mills		
Assam	Monthly	7 days
Bengal	Monthly	15 days
Bihar and Orissa ...	Fortnightly	4–7 days
	Monthly	5 days
Madras	Monthly	1–20 days
	Fortnightly	10 days
	Weekly	1–7 days
Punjab	Monthly	7–10 days
	Fortnightly	...
United Provinces ...	Monthly	15 days
	Daily	15 days
Tanneries		
Bengal	Monthly	15 days
Bihar and Orissa ...	Monthly	15–20 days

Province	Period of Payment	Waiting Period
	Tanneries—(Continued)	
Bombay	Monthly	5–15 days
	Fortnightly	1 day
	Weekly	15 days
Madras	Monthly	7 days
	Fortnightly	10–12 days
Punjab	Monthly	7–10 days
	Fortnightly	7–10 days
United Provinces ...	Monthly	15 days
	Fortnightly	15 days

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